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Regent condoles Blair

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday sent a cable to British Prime Minister Tony Blair condoling him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government over the death of several people in the terrorist bombing in Northern Ireland. Prince Hassan described the blast as a criminal act, saying that Jordan condemns such acts of violence and terrorism whatever their reasons are. On the other hand, Prince Hassan sent two cables to Kenyan President Daniel Arab Moi and Tanzanian President Benjamin William Makaba at which he extended his condolences over the loss of lives caused by the latest bombings in the capitals of the two countries.

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Senate passes press law

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Only a few senators attempted to introduce changes to the draft press and publications law yesterday, but the firm management of the session by Speaker Zeid Rifai scuffled their efforts. Eight senators out of the 36 present voted against the 54-article draft, which passed the Upper House without a single amendment. "This is a law that does not differentiate between an accurate report on the one hand, and publications circulating false reports on the other," former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti told the House. "Most of the prohibitions in the law do not take into account whether a report is accurate or not." The law, passed by the Senate as submitted by the elected representatives of the Lower House, prohibits publication of any material which disparages the King or any member of the Royal Family or reveals sensitive information about the Armed Forces. Article 42 of the draft also bans articles which could harm the stability of the Jordanian dinar, undermine national unity, degrade religion or morals, damage an individual's reputation, publish state's classified documents or give out information about secret parliamentary sessions. Journalists found in violation of the 14 topics banned in Article 42 are

liable for penalties ranging from JD5,000 to JD10,000. Human rights advocates and journalists claim that many articles in the draft contradict both the Constitution and international conventions to which Jordan is a signatory. They also assert that ambiguous language in the draft coupled with exacting penalties will be used to "harass" journalists and force a regime of self-censorship at newspapers. Though some senators presented strong arguments against different articles in the law, their small number and the few proposals they submitted made it very easy for the speaker to push the articles through without much resistance. During yesterday's session, Kabariti suggested the establishment of a higher press council to monitor journalistic ethics, help solve disputes and serve as a "safety valve" preventing selectivity and inconsistency in implementing the law and prohibiting unjust decisions regarding the punishment of publications and journalists before they are tried. Former Prime Minister Mudar Badran seconded Kabariti's proposal and asked the assembly to incorporate a provision to this effect in Article 7 of the draft. The government agreed to lay the legal framework for the establishment of the council, but Badran's proposal was not put to vote as customary in proposals seconded by another senator.

The assembly also paused at Article 25 of the law, which stipulates that "the owner of a publication should be a Jordanian national, a Jordanian-owned institution or a registered Jordanian political party." Kabariti said the article bars publications, like the London-based Al Hayat and Al Sharq Al Awsat, from printing in Jordan. "Yet there is no law that prohibits Radio Monte Carlo or MBC from broadcasting out of any part of Jordan," he said. After some debate, senators also endorsed a provision buried in the end of the draft that gives courts the right to suspend a publication while it looks into a case involving that publication for the time it deems necessary, if "the court sees that that secures public interest and national security." "Is it sensible to suspend a publication for a year while looking into a case filed against it?" asked Badran. "What if after a year the court finds the publication innocent?" Attempts by Kabariti and Senator Laila, Sharaf, a former information minister, to scrap the provision failed when the majority of the House voted to keep it. Journalists covering yesterday's session said Rifai played a pivotal role in maintaining the draft in its current format by speeding up the debate. "It was very obvious that the speaker did not want any amendments to be

made so that the draft would not go back to the Lower House," said Tareq Momani, correspondent of the Arabic Daily Al Ra'i and Vice President of the Jordan Press Association. "He broke away from the House's internal regulations on a number of occasions by not putting to vote proposals made and seconded by senators." According to the Constitution, the law will go into effect after it is ratified by a Royal Decree. If the King wishes, he can send the law back to Parliament with his reasons for not ratifying it. The Lower House Legal Committee, which revised the draft, spent more than two weeks studying the legislation and meeting with representatives from all walks of the media industry. The House then spent three sessions before finalising its deliberations over the draft. The Senate Legal Committee, on the other hand, studied the draft in one meeting and the assembly discussed the entire law in one session. The following eight senators voted against the law: Laila Sharaf, Abdul Karim Kabariti, Mudar Badran, former deputy prime minister Thouqan Hindawi, former trade minister Taher Kanaan, former trade minister Rajai Muasher, former chief of the Royal Court Adnan Abu Odeh and former minister of industry and a leading businessman Hamdi Taba'a.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday chairs the first preliminary meeting to consider priorities in public spending and the management of defence resources. Attending the meeting are members of a ministerial development committee and representatives of the Jordanian Armed Forces as well as the security departments.

Regent chairs meeting to define priorities in public spending

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday chaired the first preliminary meeting to consider priorities in public spending and the management of defence resources. The meeting, attended by members of a ministerial development committee and representatives of the Jordanian Armed Forces as well as the security departments, was convened as part of a series of meetings by the government and various concerned public sector departments in the course of preparing the state's 1999 fiscal budget. Discussion focused on priorities in defence spending within a clear and transparent framework that takes into consideration integration and interconnection among the needs of the different sectors. The Regent had called on the concerned public sector departments to define their priorities in state spending through an open dialogue involving Parliament, civic society organisations and other institutions dedicated to serving public interest. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Chief of the Royal Court Fayez Tarawneh, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh, HRH Prince, the commander of the special forces, directors of the Public Security, General Intelligence and Civil Defence departments.

Clinton testifies before grand jury, prosecutor

WASHINGTON (R) — Determined to tell "the whole truth," President Bill Clinton on Monday began giving grand jury testimony in which he was expected to admit to an "inappropriate" physical relationship with Monica Lewinsky. After last-minute talks with his private attorneys, Clinton entered the White House Map Room and began his sworn testimony a minute earlier than scheduled, at 12:59 p.m. EDT (1659 GMT), said White House spokesman Joe Lockhart. He was answering questions from independent counsel Kenneth Starr and his team, who arrived at the diplomatic entrance of the White House a half hour earlier in a pair of cars. Aides described Clinton, who turns 52 on Wednesday, as confident and ready to get it over with and said his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton was an active participant in the strategy sessions. "I wouldn't say he is exactly looking forward to it, but he knows with certainty what he is going to testify to...and that is the truth and the whole truth," said White House spokesman Mike McCurry. With 23 grand jurors watching on closed-circuit television at the federal courthouse a mile (1.6 km) away, Clinton was expected to admit what advisers called an "inappropriate" and physical relationship with Lewinsky when she was a 21-year-old unpaid White House intern. But they said he would insist he did not commit perjury when he denied an affair with Lewinsky in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case last January. Lewinsky, now 25, told the grand jury earlier this month of numerous sexual encounters with Clinton inside the White House, sources have said. Clinton became the first sitting U.S. president to give sworn testimony before a grand jury in which he is accused of crimes. His testimony was expected to take several hours. Once it was completed, his lawyer David Kendall was

Albright calls Arafat amid efforts to set up meeting

GAZA CITY (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright telephoned Palestinian President Yasser Arafat Monday amid reports of Israeli and U.S. efforts to arrange a top level meeting with the Palestinian leader. "Albright called President Arafat to discuss the latest developments in the peace process," said Nabil Abu Rudeina, a close advisor to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) president. He refused to give further details of the conversation, the latest in a series of telephone contacts between the two about Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations which have been stalled for more than 17 months. The Israeli newspaper Maariv reported Monday that Israeli and U.S. officials were pressing Arafat to meet with Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai in a bid to break the deadlock. The newspaper quoted Israeli officials claiming that the gaps between the two sides concerning the key issue of overdue Israeli withdrawals from more of the West Bank were narrower than reported in the press and that a deal was possible. But asked Monday if any meetings with the Israelis were planned, Arafat replied: "Not yet." At a meeting with leftist Israeli lawmakers on Sunday Arafat insisted the negotiations were at a dead-end and warned that Palestinians were losing patience with the stalemate. Speaking after a meeting here Monday with former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard, Arafat called on the broader international community to join in pressuring Israel. "The international community must act to save the situation," he said. Arafat also reaffirmed his support for a joint French-Egyptian suggestion made several months ago for an international conference on the stalled peace process. The Palestinians have refused to meet directly with the Israelis for some two weeks, saying the Israeli side was not negotiating in good

U.N. said likely to give arms inspectors go-ahead

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council is considering telling U.N. weapons inspectors to carry on with a "full range of activities" in Iraq, despite Baghdad's recent decision not to cooperate that has led to a temporary suspension of inspections, council sources said on Monday. The 15-nation body was to hold consultations later in the day (3:30 p.m. GMT) on replies to be sent to the heads of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who formally notified the council last week that their activities had been largely blocked. UNSCOM, headed by Richard Butler, is in charge of scrapping Iraq's chemical, biological and ballistic missile programmes while the Vienna-based IAEA, under director-general Mohammed Al Baradei, monitors its nuclear programme. Council sources said members were studying replies, drafted by the Japanese delegation, that would tell the chiefs of both agencies that the council shared their assessment that, under current circumstances, they were unable to provide assurances Iraq was complying with resolutions barring it from reestablishing banned weapons programmes. The letters would tell Butler and Al Baradei that they were mandated, under existing council resolutions, to carry out "the full range of activities, including inspections." They would also be told to continue to report to the council any time they were hindered in any way from carrying out those activities. UNSCOM and the IAEA halted inspections of new sites in Iraq last week, but U.N. experts are continuing to monitor previously declared facilities where banned weapons activities could be carried out. Telling Butler and Al Baradei to continue with inspections, while implicitly leaving it to them to decide when and how to proceed, would force Iraq to consider whether to carry out the non-cooperation threat it has announced but not yet had to implement.

Majali set to reshuffle cabinet, officials predict

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Officials on Monday predicted that His Majesty King Hussein's recent empowerment of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to accept or order the resignations of ministers and the prime minister will only result in a cabinet reshuffle. They said the reshuffle could be carried out early next week, after the publication of a much-awaited report by a commission of inquiry on the water crisis, expected to be released on Wednesday. But officials excluded the possibility of a government change for the present. "There is general agreement that the King intended to give the Regent adequate authority to run the country during his absence," a source close to the Palace said. "But this does not mean that the Regent will fully use all the powers he has," he said. According to the source, the

underlying message to the government in the King's move was "to either work harder, be more efficient and solve problems, or resign." However, "there will be no dramatic changes," stressed one official. King Hussein, currently undergoing chemotherapy in the U.S., signed on August 12 a Royal Decree lifting, for the first time in the history of the Kingdom, one of the limits to the Regent's authority — that of accepting or demanding the resignations of ministers and the prime minister. Since no reference to the authority to appoint ministers or governments was ever made in Royal Decrees designating the Regent, analysts said the Regent has always been virtually invested with such authority. The only powers that remain outside the scope of the Regent's authority, as specified by this week's decree, are entering into treaties and amending the Constitution.

Officials yesterday said the decree signalled the possibility that the King could extend his stay abroad for weeks or even months. "The King could stay away for a long time, until he finishes treatment and recovers completely," one top official told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview yesterday. King Hussein, who has been at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, since July 14 for treatment of a B-cell lymphoma, is currently undergoing the second of six cycles of intravenous chemotherapy, each lasting four days with a break of three weeks in between. The Aug. 12 decree came amid unusually direct calls for the resignation of the 23-member team of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, in power since March 1997. The government has been accused by deputies and the press of lacking transparency and shunning responsibility for the July

"growth rate fiasco" and the current six-week contaminated water crisis. In early July, the government found itself at odds with Parliament in trying to explain significant discrepancies between its growth rate estimates and actual figures worked out by the Department of Statistics. Figures disclosed during a World Bank team's visit showed a growth rate of 0.8 and 2.7 per cent for 1996 and 1997, respectively, while government estimates had previously placed economic growth at 5.2 and five per cent. Diplomats said the Majali government was on the verge of resigning over the "fiasco," but the King's unscheduled departure to the Mayo Clinic put off the resignation. Officials and government watchers predict that the reshuffle will mainly affect the government's economic team. Also expected is a new replacement for the minister of water,

who resigned over the water crisis. After the Aug. 9 resignation of former Water Minister Munther Haddadin, his portfolio was entrusted to Energy Minister Mohammad Saleh Hourani. The cabinet has been criticised at home and abroad throughout its 17 months in power for alleged violations of human rights and restrictions on public freedoms, but the fire against the cabinet intensified over the past two months over a controversial press law, described by many as "draconian" legislation. In an open letter to the Regent last week, the King expressed dissatisfaction with the way the government was running the country and disclosed previously unreported cases of negligence, including a near collision of two Jumbo Jets in Jordanian airspace and a near explosion at the Aqaba power plant a few months ago, both of which could have resulted in disasters.

Two murdered at roadblock amid new wave of Algerian violence

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two people were killed when they tried to drive through a road block set up by an armed group in the western coastal region of Algeria, press reports said Monday after another violent weekend in the north African state.

The group opened fire on the car Saturday at 9:30 p.m. local time near Tipaza between Hadjout and Nador, then finished off its occupants with axes, according to some newspapers.

The attack was reportedly carried out by the same group responsible for bomb attacks on the western coast, notably the bombing of a cemetery in Sidi Rachid which killed one person and injured 10 others Friday.

Among other terrorist acts in Algeria, which is in the throes of an Islamic insurgency, a home-made bomb exploded last Thursday on a

beach at the tourist centre of Sidi Fredj on the coast west of the capital Algiers without causing casualties, security forces said.

Another 16 people were killed in three night attacks thought to be the work of armed Islamists, also last Thursday, at Ain Defla in the southwest and Laghouat in the south.

Meanwhile seven armed Islamists were reported arrested Saturday near

Relizne in the southwest as they allegedly prepared to attack a small isolated village.

They were held off by armed villagers until security forces arrived, local papers said.

Earlier this month, on August 3, as many as 40 people were knifed or burnt to death in a bus after Islamists set fire to the vehicle and cut the driver's throat at a road block.

NEWS IN BRIEF

SLA kills Lebanese guerrilla

MARIYOUN (R) — Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen killed one communist guerrilla and captured another in a clash in south Lebanon on Sunday night, an SLA security source said. He said an SLA patrol spotted "suspicious moves" near Shwaya village east of Hasbaya in the eastern sector of Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone before clashing with the two men. The Lebanese National Resistance Front, the military wing of the Lebanese Communist Party, said in a statement on Monday that its forces had attacked Israeli positions in that area, and two of its guerrillas were missing. The last time the Communist Party attacked Israeli forces in south Lebanon was in 1993, the group's sources said.

Egyptian human rights chief detained

CAIRO (AFP) — The head of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) was held briefly by police after his group published a report on the deaths of 13 prisoners in Egyptian jails. "The arrest, for four hours, of Hafez Abu Sida came a few hours after the publication of the organisation's report which highlighted serious violations of prisoner's rights and those detained in Egyptian prisons," a statement from the organisation said. The group's report, published Sunday, said that 13 prisoners had died in Egyptian prisons over the last 10 weeks due to lack of medical care. The EOHR said it believed the arrest was only the first of other "repressive measures against the organisation to undermine its pioneering role in stigmatising the violation of human rights."

Team of mine-clearing dogs in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A team of mine-clearing sniffer dogs was deployed Monday to the northern Kurdish provinces of Iraq, U.N. spokesman Eric Falt said. The team of six German shepherd dogs, three dog handlers and a supervisor arrived in Iraq via Jordan on Sunday from South Africa, Falt said. They will help mine-clearers determine the extent of the mine fields in the Kurdish provinces of Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, which are out of the control of Baghdad.

Immigrants continue hunger strike in Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Six foreigners jailed for illegal entry into Israel are continuing their hunger strike into a second week in an effort to gain political asylum. "Six foreigners, out of an initial group of 10, are continuing their hunger strike in Hasharon prison," a prison spokesman told AFP. "They are drinking water and their condition is all right because a doctor is visiting them three times a day," he said. The six Iraqis, two Iranians and two Syrians sneaked into Israel in 1993 and 1994, demanding political asylum which was ultimately refused them by the Israeli Supreme Court.

Turkish mayor appeals to European court

ANKARA (AFP) — An Islamist Turkish mayor, jailed for incitement to religious hatred, has appealed for the second time to the European Court of Human Rights to overturn the sentence. The Ankara news agency reported Monday. The mayor of central Turkish town of Kayseri, Sukru Karatepe, wants the court to cancel a five-year ban on his political activities imposed as part of a sentence handed down in 1997. He was sentenced to one-year in prison for a speech he made in November 1996, calling on his audience to "always preserve your hate for the regime that insults your religious beliefs." In April the mayor appealed to the European Court to quash his one-year prison sentence and pay eight million francs (\$1.3 million) in damages plus interest.

Turkey rejects flight ban over Cyprus

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Monday rejected a U.S. call for a ban on Turkish and Greek military flights over Cyprus in return for a halt to the planned deployment of Russian missiles on the divided Mediterranean island.

"We cannot accept this kind of a bargaining regarding the missiles," State Minister for Cyprus matters Sukru Sina Gurel told the Anatolia news agency when asked if Turkey could agree to the fly ban.

"We will continue to take all necessary measures on Cyprus," he said. Gurel's remarks came one day before the U.S. State Department's Cyprus envoy, Thomas Miller, arrives here for talks with Turkish officials.

U.S. officials have been calling on Turkey and Greece to accept the flight ban as part of efforts to reduce tensions in Cyprus.

Turkish and Greek newspapers have recently said the U.S. proposal is aimed at persuading Cyprus's internationally-recognised

Greek-Cypriot government to drop plans to deploy the Russian-made S-300 surface-to-air missiles.

Greek Defence Minister Akis Tsohatzopoulos said on August 2 that creating a no-fly zone over Cyprus would encourage Greek-Cypriot authorities to abandon the controversial S-300 order.

Ankara, which occupies the northern third of Cyprus, has threatened to use force to destroy the missiles if they are deployed, saying they threaten both Turkish-Cypriot territory and Turkey itself.

The United States has urged Greek-Cypriot authorities not to deploy the missiles, warning that such a move would fuel tension between Greece and Turkey.

Anatolia said Miller would also visit Athens after his two-day stay in the Turkish capital.

Cyprus has been divided since Turkish troops occupied its north in 1974 following a coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting it with Greece.

Iraqi family stranded in Egypt qualifies for political refugee status — UNHCR

CAIRO (AP) — An Iraqi woman and her three children, who have been stranded at Cairo International Airport for 18 days, qualify as political refugees, U.N. officials said Monday. That means that the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) can try to reunite Mahasen Hamid with her husband, an opponent of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein who is living as a refugee in Germany, said Pans Mountzias, who heads the UNHCR office in Cairo.

Hamid and the children — sons Ali, 10, and Zaid, 8, and daughter Rayan, 7 — have been living in a detention room at the airport since July 31.

Mountzias said they had "little money left to buy more food" and were making do with handouts from airport security people and cleaners.

She had feared deportation to Iraq after the family was visited at the airport by an Iraqi diplomat.

But Mountzias and Egyptian officials said that wouldn't happen.

"We believe it is a very serious case because the husband is a political refugee and their [the family's] deportation could endanger their lives," Mountzias said.

He said, however, that it could take months to work out the details of the family's reunification.

Mohammad Khadravi, an Egyptian foreign ministry official in charge of refugees, told the Associated Press that Hamid and the children would not be deported to Iraq.

"Egypt has a long tradition of hospitality toward refugees, and we will not deport her to the country of origin," Khadravi said.

Reporters have not been given permission to visit Mahasen, and it was unclear why she has not been allowed out of the airport.

"We are working with the Egyptian government to allow Hamid...to leave the airport," Mountzias said.

Hamid's husband, Hadi Al Mohammad,

41, participated in the uprising against Saddam's regime that followed the Gulf war in 1991, according to his brother, Hassan Al Mohammad. Hassan, Al Mohammad fled Iraq that year to an Arab country and then to Germany three years ago, where he lives as a refugee.

Hamid's case came to public attention after Hassan learned of her plight and sent a letter to the UNHCR seeking help.

Hassan said in a telephone interview from his home in Glasgow, Scotland, that Hamid had left Iraq for Jordan last February in hopes of joining her husband in Germany.

He said she and the children flew via Cairo to Budapest, Hungary, where she hoped a professional smuggler would help get her into Europe.

But the smuggler stole her passport in Budapest, and the family spent a month at the airport there before they were sent back to Cairo.



REFUGEES DETAINED IN TURKEY: A group of 331 would-be refugees, mostly Turkish nationals and Iraqi Kurds, wait Monday at a sports hall in Bodrum on the Aegean coast after being detained by Turkish security. They were preparing to board a ship to Greece on their way possibly to northern European countries (AP photo)

Israel wants 'major' role in hand out of Swiss bank settlements

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel wants a major role in the distribution of \$1.25 billion which Swiss banks have agreed to pay out to settle Holocaust-era claims, officials said Monday.

Avraham Hirschson, a member of parliament from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party, has submitted a bill to create a Jewish People Fund that would oversee disbursement of the Swiss bank funds, his spokeswoman said.

The oversight body would be comprised of Israeli officials and leaders of international Jewish organisations which spearheaded negotiations with the banks, she said.

In a meeting with U.S. Jewish leaders in New York, Hirschson was quoted in the Israeli press as warning about the possibility of unsightly battles for money between different Jewish groups representing Holocaust survivors.

At the same time the Israeli government wants to control the distribution of Swiss restitution to Holocaust survivors and their heirs inside Israel, Netanyahu's spokeswoman said.

"What Israel would like to do is have the distribution of whatever funds are to be returned in the hands of the government rather than Jewish organisations," David Bar Ilan told AFP.

Bar Ilan said the government was best placed to han-

dle the distribution "because it represents the people of Israel and is accountable to them while the [Jewish] organisations are not always accountable."

Embarrassed by criticism that the Israeli government played almost no role in the successful negotiations with the Swiss banks, the foreign ministry has also announced the creation of a special team to seek restitution of other Jewish assets lost during the Nazi period, officials said.

The team is to be headed by Gideon Meir, the ministry's advisor on diaspora affairs, a spokeswoman said.

Under the agreement reached last week in a U.S. court, two Swiss banks agreed

to pay \$1.25 billion over three years to Holocaust survivors or their heirs.

The money is restitution for accounts opened by Jews prior to World War II and of which the banks subsequently claimed they had no record.

The Israeli government had come under criticism for failing to take an active role in the negotiations with the Swiss banks, leaving the effort largely to international organisations like the U.S.-based World Jewish Congress.

With the Swiss bank issue resolved, Jewish leaders and Israeli officials have called for renewed efforts to recover plundered Jewish assets and lost insurance money elsewhere in Europe.

U.N. denies Shah gave interview to UAE paper

BAGHDAD (AFP) — U.N. special envoy Prakash Shah did not give an interview to a United Arab Emirates newspaper, a U.N. spokesman in Baghdad said Monday, but the newspaper said it stood by the story.

"Shah did not give an interview to Al Bayan newspaper and the comments attributed to him are false," a U.N. spokesman told AFP, adding that the text of the interview published was "completely invented."

Al Bayan, an Arabic-language daily, published Monday what it said was a full question and answer interview with Shah on his mission to Iraq and the crisis over weapons inspections in the sanctions-hit state.

The newspaper said it stood

by the story. "Our correspondent in Baghdad met him [Shah] for an interview and sent her interview yesterday [Sunday] to the newspaper," foreign editor Omar Al Omar told AFP.

Meanwhile, the U.N. spokesman said that Shah had transmitted a report to the U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan on his talks in Baghdad, who will inform the U.N. Security Council.

Shah arrived in Baghdad on Thursday to deliver a message from Annan to Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz calling on Iraq to reverse its decision to end cooperation with weapons inspectors.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
15:30 Small Talk — "Quiz Show"
16:00 Border Town
16:30 Doc. — Baby It's You
17:00 Doc. — Skeleton Coast Safari
18:00 French Programmes — Les Coeurs Brulés
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Fractures
19:30 News headlines
19:35 Step by Step — "Secret Admirer"
20:00 What Would You Do?
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Mini-series — An Independent Man (Ep. 3)
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film — The Water Engine
23:59 Metro Cafe
00:30 End of T.N.

PRAYER TIMES

04:33 Fajr
05:26 Sunrise/Duha
12:39 Dhur
16:18 Asr
19:22 Maghreb
20:46 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifish, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel.

4652785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624599

Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4624811

St. Alrem Syrian Orthodox

Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church

Tel. 865897

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 568404

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 511295

Church of Jesus Christ of Last-

er Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la

Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646134

Church of Presentation, Sweifish

Tel. 5920146

The Uniate Catholic Church

Tel. 4624757

The English-Language

Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

892679

The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

The Armenian Catholic

Church Tel. 771331

The American Orthodox

Church Tel. 775261

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Relative to wet weather conditions

will prevail with temperatures rising

slightly, and winds north-

westerly light to moderate. In

Aqaba, it will be hot, winds

northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 21/36

Aqaba 28/41

Deserts 19/38

Jordan Valley 27/41

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 34, Aqaba 40 Humidity

readings: Amman 22 per cent.

Aqaba 36 per cent.

Following are the highest temper-

atures expected today in the fol-

lowing areas:

Ajloun 30

Jerash 37

Um Qays 36

Madaba 36

Petra 38

Dead Sea 42

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Afif Shukri 489863

Dr. Khalil Ramadan 4774397

Dr. Nidal Dahleh 5827195

Dr. Youssef Naser 4751144

Al Asema pharmacy 4637055

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Shameisani pharmacy 4637660

Nairoukh pharmacy 4623672

IRBID:

Dr. Isam Salih 246858

Al Quds pharmacy 4633201

ZARQA:

Dr. Nidal Atallah 994424

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department

5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue

4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 4621111

4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Shmeisani Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279

Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164

Italian Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3

Al-Bashir 4775112/6

Army, Marka 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 56024050

Amal Hospital 5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

(09) 983323

Repairs

Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. 4636381

RJ Flight Information 4453200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 4453200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and

Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic, Abdali 5666131/7

Hussein Medical Centre Tel.

5856856

Luzmila 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6

Akileh Maternity 4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Mulhas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 5647071

Shmeisani Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279

Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164

Italian Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3



Foreign Minister Jawad Anani meets with his Sudanese counterpart Mustafa Othman Ismail, who arrived yesterday on an official visit (Petra photo)

Sudanese FM arrives on official visit

AMMAN (Petra) — Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Othman Ismail arrived Monday for an official visit to the Kingdom during which he will convey a message to HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, from Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir regarding bilateral relations. Ismail will hold talks with

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani and other senior officials. In a statement on his arrival, Ismail said the Arab and Islamic nations are in dire need of His Majesty King Hussein during these hard circumstances which our nation is passing through.

The Sudanese minister said his visit to Jordan is in response to an invitation from his Jordanian counterpart Anani, with whom he will hold talks on bilateral relations and coordination of issues of common concern. Ismail described Jordanian and Sudanese ties as strong. For his part, Anani wel-

comed the visit of the Sudanese minister, saying that Jordan supports Sudan, which is currently under sanctions. "We support our Sudanese brethren and King Hussein has a stand against these sanctions," said Anani. "We are looking forward to joint investments in agricultural fields," he added.

Energy delegation returns from working tour of Egypt

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources returned Monday to Amman after concluding discussions in Egypt with Egyptian officials on bilateral cooperation in renewable energy. Delegation members Khaled Fayed Shreideh and Ziyad Jibril, both engineers from the ministry, said they toured solar and wind-energy installations as well as water desalination and research centres, among other projects, in Cairo and Ghardaqah during their one-week visit.

They met with Egyptian Energy Minister Maher Abazah and examined the prospects of Jordanian-Egyptian cooperation in renewable energy fields. The two sides agreed to exchange expertise and information, conduct joint training programmes for personnel working in renewable energy fields, and rationalise energy consumption. They also agreed to jointly invest in projects to manufacture equipment needed for these pro-

grammes. They called for cooperation between Egyptian and Jordanian energy institutions and recommended that Cairo and Amman conclude an agreement on cooperation in renewable energy. The visit was in implementation of decisions passed by the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee at its meeting in Cairo in July 1997.

Jordan and Egypt are currently working on linking their national electric grids, a project expected to be completed in October of this year, according to officials from the two countries. The linkage, part of a network which will also eventually include the grids of Turkey, Iraq and Syria, is expected to save the two countries at least \$5 million a year.

The Jordanian-Egyptian project was to have been inaugurated last December but was postponed due to the collapse of a massive coral reef, which broke an underwater cable in the Red Sea.

Amman named regional office of Arab-African parliamentary group

AMMAN (Petra) — An agreement was signed Monday officially naming Amman as host of the regional office of the Population and Development Forum (PDF), an organisation which aims at strengthening Arab-African relations and promoting cooperation between Arab and African parliaments. The PDF was established at a conference of Arab and African parliaments held in South Africa in May 1997, according to Senator Marwan Hmoud, who signed the accord in his capacity as PDF secretary general. Foreign Minister Jawad Anani also signed the agreement.

In a statement following the signing ceremony, Hmoud said a decision was taken at last year's meeting to establish a regional office in Amman in order to promote Arab-African parliamentary relations.

Hmoud said the Lower House of Parliament has a special committee responsible for population and development affairs and is concerned with promoting Arab-African parliamentary relations. The regional office, which is to represent all Arab parliaments, will be accorded the same status as any other international organisation in Jordan, he added.

The signing of the agreement was also attended by Samir Habashneh, a former deputy who served as PDF secretary general before Hmoud. In an address, Habashneh underlined the importance of the forum as an instrument for promoting Arab-African relations. He said that through this forum, Jordan and other Arab countries can play a key role in improving and strengthening Arab-African ties.

Checkpoints set up in Amman to control alleged water profiteering

By Mubarrad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police checkpoints have been set up around the capital to monitor the activities of water tankers in order to crack down on drivers charging exorbitantly high prices, the government announced Monday.

"Police are currently forcing truckers to sell water at the government-fixed price of JD1.250 per cubic metre by sending them to government water distribution offices scattered across western Amman," Amman Governor Tal'at Nawaisa was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said the government has set new regulations which require the tankers to carry a manifest from the Ministry of Supply in which the name of the driver, the serial number of the truck and the name of the cus-

tomers must be written.

The Public Security Department and Ministry of Supply have also organised patrols on Amman side streets to prevent infiltration of unauthorised tankers into the capital, according to Nawaisa.

"If the driver does not have the manifest, he will be considered in violation of regulations," Nawaisa said. He warned that drivers not in possession of such manifests could be carrying water unfit for human consumption.

The government directed police officers and officials from the ministries of Water, Interior and Supply to monitor the well-water market and put government-owned tankers into service.

But an official monitoring water well activity in Safat, north of Amman, said government efforts to stop illegal practices by truckers have failed.

UAE offers water to Jordan

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates on Monday offered a million litres of water to Jordan, the official news agency WAM reported. The water is a gift from the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Khalifa.

"We are nothing but window dressing," said the official. "The problem is with the customers tempting truckers by offering them up to JD120 for six cubic metres of water."

Drivers complain that police measures are adversely affecting their daily transport capacity of water. "These measures force us to ask for higher prices," said one driver.

Many citizens alleged that truck drivers were refusing to abide by the government's set price and instead selling water at JD7-8 per cubic metre.

"Some truckers claim they have their own contracts with firms, foreign

embassies and leading hotels who are willing to pay any price," said the police officer guarding a water well in Safat.

The government announced Sunday that many of the private-run wells designed for agricultural use were permitted to sell water to the public.

The decision came after officials said they were forced to partially shut down the troubled Zai Water Treatment Plant, which supplies almost half of the capital's domestic water needs.

The government said German experts are currently working at the plant to decide on the proper procedures to handle the crisis.

News agency committee clears journalists of misquoting minister

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A committee investigating whether the official Jordan News Agency, Petra, and one of its reporters misquoted recent remarks by Minister of Information Abdullah Ensour has found them innocent of the charges.

Ensour ordered the investigation after remarks he made last week at a press briefing angered Minister of Health Ashraf Kurdi.

Petra's three-member committee said it listened to and read statements by reporter Mohammad Malkawi and managing editor Hani Hussami and found both "not responsible with what was carried by local dailies the second day."

Furthermore, they are not responsible for statements made by the minister," the report, released on Saturday, said.

The issue was highlighted last Thursday when Kurdi asked Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to intervene after Ensour told a press briefing that the res-

ignation of the health minister hinged on the outcome of an investigation into the water crisis.

Ensour denied having made such remarks and asked the Petra official to run a denial of the remarks he made about Kurdi, which were carried by both Al Ra'i newspaper and Petra.

He also said that he would take Al Ra'i daily to court and supply the judiciary with tapes of the two-hour press conference.

According to an Al Ra'i editor, the paper contacted Majali's office and told his aides that it also could provide the court with a transcript of the briefing.

After investigating the issue, government officials made Petra run an urgent news item asking subscribers to cancel the report carrying Ensour's denial.

Later that week, the Ministry of Information blamed Petra's reporter and managing editor with misquoting the minister and asked that every news item that the agency transmits be checked by the Press and

Publications Department.

Sources at Petra said the management rejected such a demand and formed an investigation committee to look into the issue.

The committee said it listened to two tapes and saw one video recording of last Monday's briefing, adding that Malkawi's transcript of the briefing was "acceptable, reasonable and not in bad faith, especially since the agency insists on objectivity, honesty and credibility in reporting."

It said Malkawi was a credible reporter who is usually assigned to such events and that he has never misquoted anybody throughout his entire service with the agency.

Malkawi told the Jordan Times on Monday that he was surprised with the minister's denial of his own remarks and that he hoped Ensour would have resorted to a neutral party to verify his comments before issuing the denial.

"He did not even bother to check the records of the meeting, but rather used his own judgement," he said.

He complained that mistakes made by reporters are usually investigated by the Press and Publications Department, while mistakes made by officials go by unchecked.

"Journalists should be protected from officials' mistakes," he said.

Several local dailies have recently stepped up criticism of both Ensour and Kurdi, claiming they mismanaged the water crisis.

Ensour was serving as acting prime minister when the water crisis broke on July 10 after residents of Amman, especially the western areas, complained of foul-smelling and discoloured water supplies.

While stating that water supplies were not contaminated, Kurdi urged residents to boil water for a minute.

Independent journalists who taped Ensour's weekly briefing days after Majali returned home from visiting His Majesty King Hussein in the United States insisted his comments about Kurdi were not taken out of context.

Sea of troubles beset waterless Amman residents, businesses

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The six-week-old water contamination crisis has forced Jordanians to adopt often neglected water conservation practices in order to cope with scant supplies and the resulting hardships in their daily lives.

Residents of western Amman the area at the heart of the crisis, say the problem has forced them to think of innovative ways to tackle the water shortages.

Like most Jordanians, they took little heed of state-orchestrated media campaigns, seminars and newspaper ads stressing the need to save water to ensure a better future.

"It is good that this crisis happened, because people will now think twice before opening a water tap," said Mousa Salameh, an engineer long accustomed to hearing officials warn about chronic water deficits in a country where the population is fast outgrowing its water resources.

"My neighbours, who used to spend hours cleaning their cars with running water every other day, are now using a bucket every week to clean their vehicles," he told the Jordan Times.

"Most of those who used to flush their toilets every time they used them are now doing so only once or twice a day," he added.

"Others tell me they are seriously thinking of replacing grass lawns with flowers and vegetation that consume less water, and others even talk of having to kill most of their trees because they themselves have no water to drink."

Official figures suggest that by 2000, Jordan's population, growing at around 3.5 per cent per year, will require 1,257 million cubic metres of water to cover minimum needs, while resources will be

capable of supplying only 960 million cubic metres.

Jordan relies mainly on rainwater, which is tapped from surface water sources such as rivers and renewable groundwater sources, to meet domestic, agricultural and industrial needs.

Meanwhile, Jordanians continue to grapple with the crisis that has cut off already rationed summer supplies since early July, when they complained of foul-smelling and discoloured supplies.

Some economists say it is too early to estimate the impact the crisis has had on the economy, but most businesses and citizens continue to feel the pinch.

"It is a zero sum game," said independent economist Fahed Faneek. "What harmed some benefited others," he said, referring to local water bottling companies whose slow business was revived by demand from thirsty citizens.

But he said the tourism industry, which has long shown sensitivity to political uncertainty in the region, could stand to lose the most.

Owners of furnished flats said many of their Gulf Arab tenants, who had booked apartments for three months as of July, had to cut short their stay. Border officials said many of them headed to neighbouring Syria and Lebanon.

Economist Yusuf Mansur agreed saying it was too soon to estimate economic losses. "But it is obvious that some businesses have suffered," Mansur said.

Several four- and five-star hotels said they were asking guests to conserve on water. Many complained of lost time and money in obtaining water supplies from private tankers.

Hoteliers were divided on the impact of the crisis, as most are spending extra unbudgeted money without raising rates.

"We have been forced to ask our customers to economise their water consumption," said Jonathan Soper, general manager of the landmark InterContinental Hotel.

"Until now, the problem has not affected our occupancy, but it might if it stays," he told the Jordan Times.

A notice to all guests at the InterContinental announced that due to the crisis, the hotel had "no choice but to take severe steps to reduce [water] consumption. Please use as little as possible."

Showers are more economical than baths," the notice also said. Linens would be changed "only every other day" and the laundry service would "be stopped for the time being."

It added that "should the situation worsen, we [will] have to cut the supply of hot or all water to rooms except for 07:00-09:00 hrs and 19:00-21:00 hrs."

At another leading Amman property, a hotel representative said: "The problem is seriously affecting us as we buy water from tankers and this is expensive and time-consuming. But it has not affected our customers yet."

Several hospitals around western Amman said they were depending on their own water wells though they were economising on usage.

Shmeisani Hospital is feeling the symptoms of the shortage.

"Lack of water is harming us, whether doctors, patients or staff. It takes ages to find our daily needs of 30 cubic metres of water," said a hospital official.

Several factories, such as cement suppliers who need water to mix supplies, were hard hit. One owner said he had to shut down his business for a day because he could not find trucked water, while another said he was

spending extra on ensuring swift extra supplies. Many said their credibility was hurt by their inability to deliver on orders.

"We have to grease so many palms before we get water in tankers. It has become a thriving black market business that no measure can break," said one industry owner.

The government, responding to popular complaints of massive profiteering, sent monitors two weeks ago to supervise distribution of supplies at 40 private wells.

But most residents said the measures have not eased their difficulties as they have to wait for days to get meagre supplies. Complaints of exploitation by many involved private water supply in the business continue to mount.

Though the government set the price of a cubic metre of water at JD1.250, many residents said they are spending seven times more than the fixed rate. Each cubic metre of water is sold to the tanker driver for 300 fils.

Others also say tough security measures and bureaucracy involved were backfiring. Many tanker drivers have been detained for hours because they were caught ferrying supplies to people whose names did not appear on government waiting lists.

Restaurant owners, hairdressers, and flower shops also had complaints.

"We are paying JD90 a day on water tankers because we have no other choice and we cannot work without water," said a manager at the popular Italian restaurant Romero.

"Fortunately the problem has not affected our customers yet, but nobody knows what could happen next."

On the outskirts of Amman, flower nursery manager Mazen

Ghalaeni said: "Plants and flowers are like humans, they cannot live without water. We had to stop cultivating some plants because they die from lack of water."

Capital city residents, whose tribulations were aggravated by a month of record high summer temperatures, said they are most concerned with poor personal hygiene.

"We are now going to swimming pools and to health clubs to justify taking showers there," said a well-to-do businessman.

For the less affluent, the crisis has not only been a hardship but a major nuisance. Many are flocking to homes of relatives with continued water supplies to fill jerry cans and bottles for day-to-day use and to natural springs for drinking purposes.

"Others might be using bottled water to cook food and wash vegetables," said Ahmad Daasan, a government official earning JD120 a month. "But I cannot afford buying water to let my eight children quench their thirst."

Several have also moved to family homes in rural areas near Amman to ensure continued water supplies.

In addition, reduced levels of water in Amman's sewage network has harmed operations at wastewater treatment plants, water experts said.

Some are concerned that a prolonged water shortage could encourage the spread of disease.

"Lack of running water in sewage networks puts high pressure on treatment plants which as a result cannot work effectively and produce low-standard treated water," said Raja Jedoon, a water expert and former assistant secretary general of the Water Authority. "Not to mention that [such circumstances] could spread disease and foul smells."

what's going on

CONCERT

* Performance by the Indian Sitar Kathak Group at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILMS

* "American Friends" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m. (Children's film "Black Beauty" will be screened on Wednesday Aug. 19 at 6:00 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Bandak at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.

* Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.

* "Miniatures in Humanities and Environment" by Walid Nasrallah at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Aug. 25 (Tel. 5526932).

Kosovo fighting dies out after rebel loss

PRISTINA, Serbia (R) — Fighting died out in Serbia's Kosovo province Monday, a day after Serb security forces took control of one of the separatist rebels' last bastions.

Serb sources said a mop-up operation in the Pec district, including the village of Lodja, that followed the fall of the western hill town of Junik Sunday, was over.

The sources said two Serb policemen were killed late Sunday in Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrillas' attack at police stations in two villages on the Pristina-Prizren road, in southwestern Kosovo.

Ethnic Albanian sources did not report any new fighting Monday. Late Sunday, they said that the fighting raged in the village of Lodja, near Pec.

Reporters who were escorted to Junik Sunday saw large plumes of smoke

billowing from villages some three km away from Pec and heard at least two loud explosions.

The town of Pec itself was almost completely deserted Sunday.

Junik fell after troops besieged it for more than two weeks.

Two Yugoslav soldiers and four policemen were killed in the last battle before Serb security forces drove KLA guerrillas out of the town.

The loss of Junik was bound to be a military and psychological blow for the KLA, which is fighting for Kosovo's independence from Serbia.

It gives Belgrade the upper hand in peace talks that ethnic Albanians have agreed to resume under intense pressure from the United States. No dates for the talks have been set.

Meanwhile, the Albanian-language daily

Koha Ditore said on some 40,000 people took shelter in a four-kilometre-long strip in the Decani River area.

The report could not be independently confirmed. The United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, in Pristina said they did not have any fresh numbers on refugees who fled the recent fighting.

Relief agencies have previously estimated that about 200,000 people, or 10 per cent of Kosovo's population, have been uprooted by the fighting.

Koha Ditore also said that KLA guerrillas were back in the village of Glodjane, in western Kosovo.

Serb security forces took Glodjane last week, but left after a while. Koha's reporter said that dozens of houses were burned and several were levelled. There were no civilians in the village.

NATO flexes military muscle to help contain Kosovo crisis

TIRANA, Albania (AP) — As a dozen jet fighters soared overhead, about 1,700 troops from the United States and other countries began a five-day military exercise Monday to show the alliance's readiness to contain the crisis in neighbouring Kosovo province.

Security was heightened because of concern over Islamic extremists following explosions at U.S. embassies in Africa and the arrest of several Egyptians here, reportedly in connection with religious violence in Egypt.

Albanian troops cordoned off the air base adjacent to Rinas International Airport

where the opening ceremony was held. American and German troops also manned checkpoints.

Troops from 14 nations will conduct training for parachute supply drops, vehicle and foot patrols, marksmanship and other non-offensive drills in the Albanian mountains. The participants include 11 NATO members plus Russia, Albania and Lithuania.

Ten other nations have sent observers. Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency said the Russians agreed to participate after NATO promised the exercises would be as "politically sterile" as possible.

Navy Capt. Steve Burnette, spokesman for the exercise, said the operation, "Cooperative Assembly 1998," was to "provide stability and help contain a regional crisis."

The Americans and Europeans fear the fighting in Serbia's Kosovo province, where ethnic Albanians are fighting for independence, could spill over into neighbouring countries with large Albanian communities.

Hundreds have died in fighting in Kosovo since Serb police cracked down on the separatist KLA in February. Last week, the Alliance announced plans for a second exercise in Macedonia.

Aung San Suu Kyi in 6th day of deadlock with junta

YANGON (AFP) — Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was Monday locked in the sixth day of a roadside standoff with the country's junta as her deadline for parliament to be convened loomed.

"She's still sitting there," one Western diplomat said, adding that to the National League for Democracy (NLD) leader, her two drivers and an official from her party accompanying her were all "healthy."

"I have heard of journalists and some other foreigners who tried to approach the area but were turned back at a checkpoint," the envoy said.

"But some reports are still getting through," the diplomat added, saying the country's junta was probably the source of the latest information on the stand-off as it was keen to show Aung San Suu Kyi was not being mistreated.

A foreign correspondent visiting Myanmar told AFP he had been stopped at the checkpoint near the site of the stand-off, a small bridge linking a highway to adjacent rice paddies about 25 kilometres from Yangon.

It is her fourth failed attempt to visit supporters outside the capital in little over a month.

He said security officials had told him that the military was conducting exercises in the area and that he should return in about two weeks.

France Monday denounced restrictions imposed on Aung San Suu Kyi's movements, adding that it was "deeply concerned about the health and safety" of the Nobel peace laureate.

"France condemns the unacceptable behaviour of the Myanmar authorities, who have blocked, once

more, Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi while she was on her way outside the capital," the French embassy here said in a statement.

France called on the junta to her freedom of movement and to enter into dialogue with the NLD and other opposition groups.

The junta Monday closed all schools in Yangon in apparent preparation for university examinations, foreign diplomats said.

It was not immediately clear if schools outside the capital were also closed, and junta officials could not be reached for comment.

"The kids showed up for school and were just sent home," one Western diplomat said, adding there had been no notice of the closures.

The government has for several weeks been advising some, but not all, university students they could sit exams Tuesday for the first time since universities were closed following campus unrest in December 1996.

However, the exams were to be held at certain schools and other facilities across the country in what diplomats said was a bid to avoid students gathering at campuses or travelling to Yangon.

The junta has stressed it is doing everything possible to maintain Aung San Suu Kyi's health and security after barring her from travelling to meet supporters in a provincial centre last Wednesday.

A similar stand-off at the same bridge last month ended when she was forcibly driven back to Yangon.

The NLD won 1990 elections by a landslide but the junta has refused to relinquish power. It has demanded the junta convene parliament by Aug. 21 or face

unspecified consequences.

Aung San Suu Kyi's supporters said her health suffered during the last stand-off and blamed the junta.

The junta has played down the latest stand-off, with a spokesman Sunday saying the opposition leader was in a "camping vehicle" and was "visiting Anyarsu, a small but picturesque village outside Yangon."

"Ms. Suu Kyi left Yangon on Aug. 12 on her way to the city of Patheingyi, but regrettably, recent threats of violence have made travel there by prominent persons inadvisable at this time," the spokesman said in a statement.

"Until safety conditions improve, Suu Kyi is visiting Anyarsu, a small but picturesque village outside Yangon, while the government of Myanmar continues to make every effort to ensure their comfort and safety."

The junta said it had supplied musical cassettes including religious songs and recordings by Madonna and Michael Jackson for Aung San Suu Kyi's enjoyment, as well as an ambulance in case of an emergency. A "beach umbrella" and "garden chairs" had also been provided, along with "cakes, cookies and soft drinks."

Meanwhile, pro-democracy activists took their protest outside Myanmar's embassy in neighbouring Thailand into its 13th day Monday.

Some 50 activists maintained their peaceful vigil outside the embassy compound, demanding political change in Myanmar.

They have pledged to remain at the embassy until the junta convenes parliament, citing the Aug. 21 deadline set by Aung San Suu Kyi.



An armed Serb villager looks through a hole in a stone shelter at Mt. Sar Planina near the village of Vrbestica. Serbia forced separatist rebels out of one of their last bastions in Kosovo, giving Belgrade a commanding position for peace talks (Reuters photo)

Six Bosnian Croats accused of ethnic cleansing go on trial

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Six Bosnian Croats accused of organising the slaughter of over 100 Bosnian Muslims in 1993 went on trial at the U.N. war crimes tribunal Monday.

Prosecutor at the tribunal, Franck Terrier, said he would call about 70 witnesses to prove that the six men played a key role in planning the "ethnic cleansing" of Bosnian Muslims from Ahmici-Santici, a village in central Bosnia, and its surrounding area in April 1993.

During the attack, Croatian defence forces known as the HVO, "often machine-gunned the unarmed inhabitants indiscriminately, shooting men, women and children, and looting and setting fire to their homes," Terrier told the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in a pre-trial brief.

However, lawyers for the defendants, Drago Josipovic, Dragan Papic, Vladimir Santici, brothers Mirjan and Zoran Kupreskic and their cousin Vlatko Kupreskic, told the tribunal's judges that prosecutors had twisted the facts and events to suit their own needs.

Terrier said that Bosnian Muslims were singled out for expulsion from the village, located in the lush, fertile Lasva valley, and that Muslim buildings, such as mosques, were systematically destroyed.

"Virtually every Muslim-owned house, stable and shed had been destroyed; yet not a single home owned by a Bosnian Croat had been significantly damaged," Terrier said.

None of the 356 Bosnian Muslims living in Ahmici were left in the village after the attack on April 16, 1993. Over 100 were killed,

including many who were burned alive in their homes, while the others fled.

The six defendants, aged between 31 and 43, were all HVO soldiers and were instrumental in the Ahmici attack, prosecutors said.

But the lawyer for brothers Mirjan and Zoran Kupreskic, Jadranka Glumac, disputed the prosecution's interpretation of the facts.

"Some events did take place but the prosecution has misinterpreted many of these events and presented them in such a way that they seem like war crimes," Glumac said.

Collectively, the six men, commonly known as the Kupreskic or Vitez group, are charged with 22 counts of crimes against humanity and 16 counts of violations of the laws or customs of war.

They all pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Fossett plucked from Pacific

SYDNEY (R) — U.S. balloonist Steve Fossett was rescued Monday by an Australian yacht after a death-defying fall of thousands of metres into the South Pacific.

The ketch Atlanta picked up the millionaire adventurer, who had been making his fourth attempt to fly around the earth in a balloon, after he had spent a day drifting in a liferaft in the Coral Sea, Australian rescue officials said.

Australian Search and Rescue (ASR) officer Arthur Heather told Reuters that Fossett was rescued shortly before 1130 GMT and was apparently uninjured.

"The rescue's just happened. He's aboard the yacht Atlanta," Heather said by telephone from ASR headquarters in Canberra.

Asked about Fossett's health, Heather said: "Good. Apparently there are no problems."

"He's alive and well and in good spirits," he said.

Heather added Fossett would be transferred onto the New Zealand naval ship Endeavour, which was steaming towards the rescue area south of the Solomon

Islands and about 480 nautical miles off Australia's northeast coast.

The Endeavour would then proceed to Townsville, on the coast of the Australian state of Queensland, although it was not clear when the transfer would be made.

"That might be tomorrow," Heather said. "It may even be tonight, in the next couple of hours."

Fossett was earlier said to have told an Australian television reporter that he had plunged almost 9,000 metres after his balloon flew into a severe thunderstorm.

"He said he was caught in a giant thunderstorm with hail and lightning which actually ruptured his balloon. He fell 9,000 metres into the ocean," said an Australian television reporter who spoke to Fossett from a rescue aircraft.

"He says when he hit the ocean his balloon capsule caught fire and he had to evacuate into a tiny liferaft," he said.

The 54-year-old Chicago stock options broker spent the day drifting amid treacherous and uncharted reefs in

a 15-man liferaft containing water, food and a radio dropped to him by a French military aircraft.

The aircraft was dispatched from France's South Pacific territory of New Caledonia after emergency signals from Fossett were picked up early Monday morning. Australian air force planes also later made contact with him.

Fossett climbed out of his own liferaft which was attached to the gondola and balloon and into the French liferaft.

Rescuers said weather conditions were good in the area, known as the Bellona Reefs.

The Atlanta's skipper, Laurie Piper, earlier told Reuters he was on the final stages of a five-year circumnavigation when he received a distress signal.

Communication with Fossett was lost early Monday morning Australian time, sparking fears the balloonist had died in the shark-infested waters.

Fossett was warned about five hours before contact was lost that he was approaching a wall of strong thunderstorms.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Illegal immigrants trouble Italian detention centre

ROME (AFP) — Illegal immigrants created a rumpus in an Italian detention centre at the weekend in what police said was a preparation for a break-out bid. They burned mattresses in Sunday night's incidents at the centre at Ragusa, southern Sicily, and a small group of them, mostly Moroccans, attempted to attack the guards. Earlier, one immigrant had swallowed shampoo, and then banged his head against a window of the ambulance taking him to hospital, apparently to distract the guards. Police said the incidents had been staged to help the escape of about 170 other immigrants held in a centre at Pozzallo, some 30 kilometres from Ragusa. There have been a number of such escape attempts since July, some successful. Many thousands of would-be immigrants to Western Europe have arrived on Italian shores in recent months. In July alone, almost 3,000 landed in Sicily from Tunisia. Under Italian law, illegal immigrants are detained in holding centres for 30 days while authorities establish their identities. If at the end of this period, no papers have been found, the immigrant leaves the centre with an expulsion order which must be enforced within 15 days. Interior ministry figures Saturday said 392 illegal immigrants who entered the country since the beginning of July have been repatriated. According to the Italian press, several hundred immigrants without papers have not been identified and will have to leave the detention centres at the end of August with an expulsion order.

Hong Kong not pressuring UNHCR over Vietnamese refugee bill

GENEVA (AFP) — The U.N. refugee agency Monday said it faced no pressure from the Hong Kong government to pay back \$155 million it owes for the running of Vietnamese refugee camps in the territory. Hong Kong authorities spent about \$175 million during an eight year period from 1989 housing in camps a total of more than 200,000 Vietnamese refugees who arrived by the boatful in what was then a British colony. The men, women and children who poured out of the South East Asian Communist country because of poverty and persecution hoped to win political refugee status and relocation to third countries. The UNHCR, hit by a funding shortage, has so far paid back only around \$20 million, according to Kris Janowski, a spokesman at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. He insisted there were no arguments over what he called a "funding shortfall" rather than a debt. "The Hong Kong government is not pressing us. There's no pressure, there's no deadline. Our position has not changed over the years, and nor has theirs," Janowski said the UNHCR would not be able to pay up "in the near future" unless donors increased their funding. The UNHCR, which has a global caseload of 22 million refugees, runs on a budget of almost \$1 billion, mostly from voluntary contributions. "We have been trying with donors to increase funds to repay the Hong Kong bill, to no avail," he said. The refugee camps in Hong Kong were closed down before the colony reverted to Chinese rule in July 1997. But the UNHCR is still trying to place some 1,100 Vietnamese with refugee-status in third countries. It is also grappling with the problem of a further 500 people who have not been granted refugee status whom Vietnam has refused to accept.

North Korea has underground nuclear plant

NEW YORK (AP) — A massive underground complex that could be used as the heart of a nuclear weapons programme has been detected in North Korea. The New York Times reported Monday. White House and U.S. Defence Department officials fear the complex is part of an effort to renege on a 1994 agreement for North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions in exchange for billions of dollars in Western aid, officials privy to the information told the Times on condition of anonymity. North Korean officials have said that the United States has not lived up to its end of the pact, called the Agreed Framework, because the U.S. Congress hasn't authorised fuel shipments to North Korea. The shipments, worth tens of millions of dollars, are the crux of the U.S. contribution to a \$6 billion programme. Spy satellites photographed a site with thousands of workers burrowing into a mountainside 40 kilometres northeast of Yongbyon, the nuclear centre where North Korea was believed to have made enough plutonium for at least six bombs before the 1994 accord, the Times' sources said. There is no evidence that North Korean workers have started pouring cement for a reactor or a plant that would convert nuclear waste into bomb-quality plutonium, which is barred by the accord, said a top U.S. official.

Norwegian whalers fall under quota in 1998 hunt

OSLO (R) — Norwegian whale hunters will fall short of their allowed quota by almost 50 animals when the season ends at midnight Monday, the Norwegian Fisherman's Sales Organisation said. The 35 boats in this year's hunt have caught 624 minke whales out of a permitted 671 — the highest quota since the country resumed commercial whaling in 1993 in defiance of an International Whaling Commission moratorium. "The last boats will stop at midnight tonight. If they are lucky there could be one or two more caught," Per Rolandsen, adviser at the organisation, told Reuters. "We are under the quota primarily because of difficult catching conditions such as bad weather, but I think most boats that took part are pleased," he said. Bad weather largely affected the North Sea where 138 whales were caught against a quota of 178. Whaling boats require calm waters to detect minke whales, which surface to breathe areas, the controversial hunt was temporarily suspended in early July as whalers hauled in animals faster than the meat could be processed. Authorities this year extended the hunting season in northern areas off the Finnmark coast and in the Barents Sea by two weeks from the original deadline of July 31 because of delays. The permitted catch has risen from 293 in 1993 to 580 in 1997, when 503 whales were actually taken. Following an international ban on the export of whale meat and products, each year's catch is sold and eaten domestically. Prices for the meat, which is sold at auction, varied between a guaranteed minimum of 23 crowns (\$3.00) per kg and just over 40 crowns. "On average for the entire season prices have been around 30 crowns per kilo, which is about level with last year," he said.



Security forces continue to examine the scene of the Omagh bomb. No one has officially claimed responsibility for the bombing last Sunday in which 28 people are known to have died (Reuters photo)

Police arrest five after Northern Ireland blast

OMAGH, Northern Ireland (AFP) — Police in Northern Ireland arrested five men Monday in connection with a massive blast in the province as security chiefs readied to discuss how to hunt down the killers.

Security sources in Northern Ireland said the five were detained in raids on homes in and around Omagh, the quiet market town in the west of the province where the blast detonated Saturday killing 28 and wounding 220.

All five were taken in for questioning at the province's main interrogation centre at Castlereagh, Belfast.

Francis Mackay, a leading member of the 32 County Sovereignty Committee, a republican group being linked by security forces to the Omagh bombing, said his teenage son Shane was among a group of men arrested by the police.

Mackay has denied his group, believed to be the political wing of the Real IRA — a splinter IRA group suspected of being behind the blast — was responsible for the terrorist attack.

The group's name refers to

the 32 counties of both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

At Stormont Castle, the province's administrative building near Belfast, the British and Irish chiefs of police were due to meet to discuss possible security measures to deal with the terrorist threat from the dissident group.

At the same time, the Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam was to have discussions with the Irish Justice Minister John O'Donoghue.

Northern Ireland's police chief Ronnie Flanagan was to hold talks with the Irish Republic's so-called Garda Commissioner Pat Byrne to assess intelligence on the gang suspected of planting the massive car bomb and present a list of recommendations to the two governments.

Earlier Monday, part of the Stormont building complex was evacuated after a bomb alert. Police said they were checking nearby wasteground following a telephone tip-off. British Prime Minister Tony Blair stayed in the province overnight after meeting politicians on all sides and spending an hour at the hospital bedside of some of the

maimed and injured survivors.

He said visiting the victims in hospital was "one of the most horrendous experiences" in his life.

Blair said the noose would have to be tightened around the small dissident rump of extremists suspected of involvement in the bombing.

"This will be to ensure we bear down and crush out this dissident rump, in so far as it is possible to do so," he said. "Anything they (police chiefs) submit to us will be given very serious, very considered appreciation by us."

Blair said: "This is a small group of fanatical people. That does not mean to say that you can ever tackle this 100 per cent simply through security methods. But we will do everything we possibly can."

Neither leader spelled out the possible measures but it is understood that internment — the imprisonment of suspects without trial — could be an option. A spokesman for Blair said any decision on reintroducing internment would await the outcome of Monday's meeting between Flanagan and Byrne.

"There are varied opinions

on the merits and demerits of internment, and the police will have their views," he said.

Asked whether Britain's Parliament might be recalled to reinstate laws allowing internment without trial, the spokesman said: "The people we are talking about operate in the main in the (Irish) Republic."

The Republic of Ireland still has laws which would allow internment to be introduced.

Blair flew out of Belfast Monday to resume his holiday in France but a Downing Street spokesman said he would remain "in constant touch" with Abern, adding: "If it's necessary he will go back at any time."

Province leaders from both sides of the sectarian divide, including Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, condemned the blast and said the bombing should not be allowed to derail the peace process. The IRA signed up to a ceasefire over a year ago and has backed the peace deal that four months ago agreed that new power-sharing institutions would be created in which London, Dublin and the province will all play a role.

Habibie pardons three jailed for coup

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia Monday announced it would free three ageing Communists jailed a quarter of a century ago for taking part in a 1965 abortive coup which triggered former President Suharto's rise to power.

Justice Minister Muladi, speaking after attending a ceremony to mark the 53rd anniversary of Indonesia's independence, said the three would be freed on humanitarian grounds.

They were among 70 political prisoners to be freed or amnestied as a traditional national day gesture, and the first Communists to be released since the fall of Suharto on May 21.

"Considering the length of the jail terms that have been served by the prisoners, and for humanitarian considerations, it is deemed necessary to grant clemency to those prisoners," the presidential decree, signed by Habibie, said.

Muladi named the three as Maman Effendi, 80, Alexander

Warouw, 81 and Pujo Prasetyo, 72. Records show the three were sentenced to life for their role in the aborted coup.

Prasetyo and Warouw are being held at a correctional facility in the Central Java provincial capital of Semarang. It was not immediately known where Effendi is being detained.

Suharto took power in the aftermath of the failed coup and banned the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), once the world's second largest after China's.

Official figures show at least half a million people were killed and 700,000 more jailed in the aftermath of the coup. Hundreds of thousands of so-called C-category prisoners were released from the prison island of Buru in the Moluccas in 1979.

Starting in the 1980's the Suharto government released former PKI foreign Minister Subandrio, and six other elderly so-called A-Category prisoners including a PKI secretary and a

politburo member.

But in an interview with AFP last month, Habibie said he had no intention of changing the three categories of prisoners barred from release under amnesties, which include the PKI, "because that is the law."

But he hinted that in his drive to restore human rights in the post-Suharto era, he could use commutation of sentences and humanitarian reasons.

In Monday's announcement the government fully rehabilitated the name of soldier-diplomat Dharsono Rekso Hantono, a retired general who served as secretary general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) before being jailed by the Suharto government.

Dharsono died in official disgrace in the early 1990s.

It also issued amnesties and restored the names of three Muslim leaders jailed in the 1980s for alleged subversive activities but who have since been freed on parole.

Among the new releases were 18 from separatist troubled areas — six from East Timor, nine from Aceh and three from Brian Jaya. Four more East Timorese, who had been charged but not jailed, had accusations against them lifted.

Sentences were cut for 41 political prisoners and 20 others would be released on parole, Muladi said.

He said the related decrees had been signed on Aug. 15, but did not say when the prisoners would actually leave jail.

Habibie has so far released some 73 political prisoners in the three months since he took power on May 21.

The new releases and amnesties, the fourth in three months, will bring the number to some 140.

Most of the releases approved by Habibie so far have been of prisoners jailed for criticising or allegedly fomenting unrest against the Suharto regime, or breaking laws against independent unions.

Judgement day reset for P.W. Botha

GEORGE, South Africa (AFP)

— Judgement day in the drawn-out, politically explosive trial of former President P.W. Botha on charges of snubbing South Africa's truth commission was Monday set for Aug. 21.

Magistrate Victor Lugagu determined the Friday date after Botha's lawyers wrapped up their closing argument and demanded that the 82-year-old former president be acquitted.

Lugagu told the George Magistrate's Court that because of the amount of documentation produced during the seven-month trial, "we need some time to consider our judgement."

Botha's lawyer Lappe

Laubscher told the court that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) panel that took the decision to subpoena Botha in August last year did not have the required quorum as only eight of 17 commissioners were present.

He added that the panel that sat on Dec. 19 — the hearing to which Botha was subpoenaed but which he ignored — was not properly constituted either as it, too, did not have a quorum.

"My client should be acquitted on these grounds alone," Laubscher said.

An unusually buoyant Botha,

looking more relaxed Monday than at any other stage of the drawn-out trial, arrived at the court accompanied by 57-year-old Barbara, his legal secretary, and wife of two months.

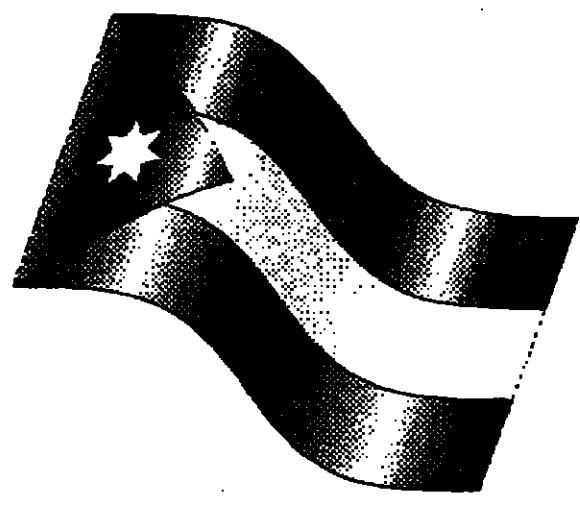
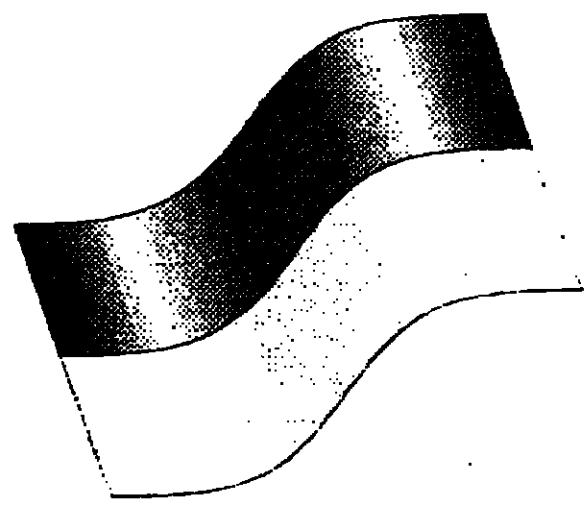
The couple was whisked through the back after police said they found a suspicious bag at the court entrance. The bag was later found to contain a court official's book.

The former president, who ruled South Africa with an iron fist from 1987 until 1989, laughed and chatted with a handful of supporters, among them his daughter Elanza Maritz, before the case resumed after a two-month adjournment.

The TRC, which is probing apartheid-era human rights crimes wanted to question Botha on aspects of his State Security Council (SSC), a panel of security chiefs who allegedly ordered political opponents assassinated.

Laubscher argued that Botha had an agreement with TRC chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu that he would not have to appear personally before the commission if he made a written submission.

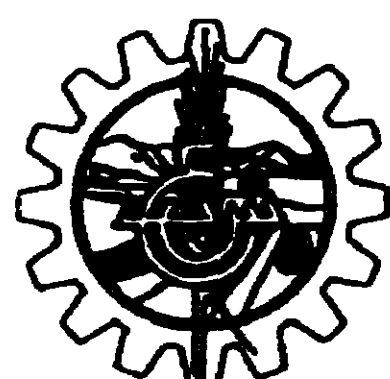
Botha supplied a 1,700-page dossier to the TRC in December but Laubscher, quoting Tutu's evidence to the court, claimed it remained unread.



Jordan Fertilizer Industry Coordination Committee



Jordan Phosphate
Mines Company



Arab Potash
Company

WISH THE PEOPLE OF INDONESIA

A HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY AFFIRMING JORDANIAN

FRIENDSHIP AND HOPES OF CONTINUED PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

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The morning after questions

U.S. PRESIDENT Bill Clinton yesterday began giving testimony to a federal grand jury about his alleged sexual "contacts" with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Thankfully, the climax of this whole affair seems to be coming to a head, thus putting an end to what some see as a source of entertaining speculation and gossip, others as a disgusting episode underlining the moral decay of the U.S., and others still as a pointless and manufactured media stunt that has long outlived its worth.

Luckily for Clinton, it's only a sexual affair and not a water crisis, and lying about the affair doesn't seem like it will lead to his impeachment. In fact, the entire spectrum of the American public is supporting him, under the reasoning that his private affairs are no one's business but his own and Lewinsky's. Clinton's nemesis in the investigations, Kenneth Starr, has become a villain to millions of Americans in what they see as an unjust quest to topple the president.

There doesn't seem to be an easy way for Clinton this time. Emerging unscathed from the Lewinsky affair is going to require that the president live up 100 per cent to his moniker of "Slick Willy." Nevertheless, the whole episode does raise questions which in fact are serious and will probably be revisited once the booming American economy slows down a bit and people begin looking for someone to take the blame.

Perhaps the American public will begin questioning whether elected officials should be held to a different standard than ordinary citizens. Should the private lives of presidents and the like be open to public scrutiny, or just the actions related to their offices?

Perhaps the issue of the massive media attention being paid to the whole investigation over the past four years will be raised. Did the media play a role in making the whole affair more important than it really was?

These and a host of other questions may be brought up and discussed, unless the next big scandal comes along and grabs the headlines. The bottom line is that Clinton acted unethically while in office if he did in fact have an affair with Lewinsky, but not illegally. Perhaps one result of the whole affair will be a public that looks more critically at the difference between the two.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek criticised the government for not immediately disclosing that His Majesty King Hussein had empowered HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to accept the resignations of ministers and the prime minister and to appoint new ministers or a new government. Fanek said the government concealed this information on the grounds that it would have reflected badly on the Cabinet. The writer said the King's move holds significant constitutional importance for the good of the country. Jordanians are now likely to support any measures the Regent takes to solve the country's crises, Fanek said. He urged the government to understand the dimension of the King's decision, saying that it should decide quickly whether or not it wants to resign.

Al Dustour's Oreib Rintawi commented on the special ministerial committee, newly formed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to deal with the fears among Israelis about the growing Arab population in the Jewish state. Rintawi highlighted that hard-liners such as Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, Interior Minister Eli Shwasy and the minister responsible for internal security Avigdor Kahalani were members of that committee. The writer said the committee report concludes the Arabs are "very dangerous," that they are threatening the unity of Israel and its Jewish identity. Among its suggestions, said Rintawi, on how to counter these dangers, the committee proposes a ban on polygamy, prohibiting Arab Israelis from marrying family members of Arab Israelis living abroad to return to Israel. He said Israel's measures to isolate the Arab community is pointless. The writer predicted that the identity of the state of Israel will cease to exist before the next century has passed.

The slow decline of terror

By Gwynne Dyer

ON SUNDAY, 24 Ukrainian coal-miners were killed by an underground explosion in the village of Beloye.

Their deaths were as horrible, the grief of their relatives as real as in Omagh the previous day, when 28 people were killed by Northern Ireland's worst-ever terrorist bomb. But Beloye did not get the same media attention as Omagh — and it was as nothing compared to the saturation global coverage of the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania the week before. Why?

Partly it was because they were Ukrainians. In the pecking order of the world's news media, western Europeans are more newsworthy than eastern Europeans, and American citizens most newsworthy of all. (Or do you imagine that a bomb in Nairobi that killed 245 Kenyans but did not kill 12 Americans would still be a hot international news topic almost two weeks later?)

More importantly, however, it was because the Ukrainians died by accident. It happens to coal-miners all the time, and we treat it with the same weary familiarity as traffic deaths. Whereas deliberate mass murder still gets our horrified attention — which, of course, is just what it is intended to do.

Thirteen years ago, former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher bravely told the American Bar Association: "We must try to find ways to starve the terrorist and the hijacker of the oxygen of publicity on which they depend." But it was always a hopeless cause: what gets our attention is precisely the cruelty and ruthlessness of the deed — and to censor media coverage of such deeds would simply be to fall in with the terrorists' strategy.

So the politicians and the priests produce the obligatory empty phrases — Pope John Paul condemned the "mindless violence" of Omagh, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair mourned the "senseless, brutal act of savagery" — even though they must know that terrorism is usually neither mindless nor senseless.

Terrorism is traditionally a highly organised enterprise that fits into a clear political strategy. It has been filling

the news for most of our lives, and will doubtless go on demanding the attention of our children and grandchildren as well. What's new is how rarely it achieves its goals these days.

There was a time, as British journalist Robert Fisk recently observed, when anyone labelled a "terrorist" by the British press — Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus, Menachem Begin of Israel — was certain to show up at Buckingham Palace within a decade or so to have tea with the queen. Terrorism was almost always part of the strategy of an armed national liberation movement, and in the colonial context it usually worked in the end.

Terrorism even had a certain legitimacy in the hands of nationalists who did not control the resources of a state. Their foreign rulers didn't need car-bombs because they had police forces and troops to impose their will — and tanks and fighter-bombers, if need be — so terrorism was a kind of equaliser.

The reason terrorism worked so well in anti-colonial struggles was that you didn't have to defeat the imperial power's superior military forces in order to win. They were a long way from home, and there was a limit to how many lives and how much money the imperial government would spend to hang onto its possessions.

The limit was never clearly defined, but if the insurgents could just hang on long enough, using terrorist tactics to make life difficult for the occupiers, they would generally cut their losses in the end and go home. Independence was granted, and the former 'terrorist' leader got to have tea with the queen or a reasonable facsimile thereof.

But the early, easy successes of terror tactics in the anti-imperial context left everybody with a greatly inflated notion of what the technique could achieve against an established national government with local roots. A few decades later, the answer is clear: virtually nothing.

Governments and armies that cannot "go home" — because they are already at home — simply do not give in to terrorism. After six years and 80,000 deaths, the Islamic fundamentalists' terrorist war against Algeria's

crypto-military regime is no closer to success than on Day One — and the likely lifespan of a young Algerian joining the insurgency is now down to about six months.

"International" terrorism, which is meant to make governments elsewhere do something the terrorists want, has had even fewer successes. In fact, it has notched up only one notable victory: the campaign to gain international recognition for the Palestinian cause, and redefine Palestinians as legitimate claimants to a state rather than just "refugees."

Terror can still be an effective spoiling strategy, as in the Hamas bombs in Israel in 1996 that wrecked the Israeli-Palestinian peace deal by ensuring the election of Benjamin Netanyahu. Similarly, the "Real IRA" bomb in Omagh on Saturday was planted by Catholic extremists who don't like the Northern Irish peace deal, in the hope of driving the Protestant paramilitaries into revenge bombings and wrecking the peace there.

But that's about the limit of terrorism's effectiveness these days — and most "international" terror now lacks even that minimal logic. To imagine that you can force the U.S. government to do your will just by killing people at random, for example, is to part company entirely with reality.

There are a number of people in the world who have succumbed to that sort of fantasy, from the "Unabomber" to Osama bin Laden, and they are capable of doing much harm. But they are not politically serious people, and many of them are not even sane. They will certainly never be having tea with the queen.

Terrorism, like cavalry charges, is a tactic that has become largely obsolete. But it took cavalry officers decades to accept that fact, and the terrorists will be with us for a while too.

The writer is a London-based syndicated columnist. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

View from the Fourth Circle by Rami G. Khouri does not appear today because the writer is abroad.

Lessons of Nairobi and Dar es Salaam

By Derek Ingram

LONDON — In the early 1960s, when I called on Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for an interview I drove up to the front door of his house in New Delhi in an ordinary taxi. Afterwards he stood on the steps to see me off. There was just one policeman on the gate.

Two or three years later, I sat in the front garden of his successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and had tea with him and his wife. We were in full view of the main road less than 50 yards away. Again, one policeman on the gate.

It was another world. In those days, political terrorism and bombings, such as we have just seen in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, were almost unknown in many countries, although the occasional assassination and other isolated incidents of political violence took place, as had happened throughout history.

These days, sudden outbreaks of terrorism are commonplace. They are becoming a replacement for international wars, much less wasteful of human life, but terrifying in their suddenness and indiscriminate nature.

The 20th century has seen a terrible culmination of warfare between states, with two world wars that cost about 65 million lives and hundreds of smaller conflicts.

But in the last two decades, direct wars between nations have virtually come to an end. What many prove to be the last great war of this type was the Iran-Iraq conflict of

1980-88 which took about a million lives.

Now almost all wars are civil or ethnic conflicts such as in Chechnya, Sudan, Afghanistan or Kosovo. Wars between states still threaten from time to time — in South America, for example — but they seem less and less likely to develop. In Europe today that type of war is becoming unthinkable.

The most talked about possibility, a third war between India and Pakistan, is increasingly unlikely. The two countries will be more hesitant about going to war now that each has a nuclear capability. The deterrent effect that arguably prevented the cold war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union from ever becoming a hot war has now come into play in South Asia.

In these circumstances, factions and countries are turning to terrorism, mostly by bomb but also increasingly by assassination. The killings of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and later her son, Rajiv, were both the result of ethnic conflict.

Quarrels in the Middle East are being fought out these days by factions using terrorism in third countries. The weapons are becoming more lethal and sophisticated but the total number of casualties is tiny compared with those resulting from wars between states.

This is no comfort to the victims. It is even less comfort to the victims that they are often total innocents living in countries that have nothing to do with conflict.

Terrorism leads to the death and injury of

few of the people who are employed to fight: the armed forces. The bulk of the victims are ordinary people totally uninvolved in the terrorists' causes.

Until the 20th century, comparatively few civilians were directly killed by war between states, although they often suffered severely from its consequences — hunger, disease and poverty.

Wars were events happening hundreds or even thousands of miles away and fought by paid armies with which they made no contact unless friends or relatives were involved.

The advent of flying changed all that, bringing mass death to great towns and cities like Guernica, Dresden, Warsaw, London. The civilians began to do the dying. Now, in the age of terrorism they, not the soldiers, are mainly the victims.

The prospect ahead is grim insofar as acts of terrorism are now likely to occur more frequently and in just about any part of the world. Stamping out this activity, despite the most sophisticated methods of detection, is tough.

Modern terrorism is a form of global guerrilla war — a type of warfare that has always been the most difficult to combat. You never know where the enemy is going to strike next.

Dar es Salaam is one of the world's most tranquil capitals, the last place where anyone would expect to find a giant car bomb. The shock to the local people is difficult to imagine.

The record for tracking down international terrorists is not so far encouraging. Car bombers are particularly difficult to identify.

Often the perpetrators are prepared to blow themselves up with the hundreds of others.

Many of the most serious outrages in recent years remain a mystery. In some cases, even the area from which the attack originates has never been identified.

Today, if you visit the home of the prime minister of India, or any other prime minister for that matter, you have to pass through several security gates equipped with metal detectors, X-rays and video cameras, and be frisked, tagged, and maybe have your passport held. Your taxi must park far away.

In the circumstances, all this has to happen. But the price can be high in terms of relations between those who govern and the people they are supposed to represent. Instead of leaders becoming closer to the people, terrorism is in danger of forcing leaders into increased isolation.

The writer was editor of Gemini News Service for 28 years and is now consultant editor. A former deputy editor of Britain's Daily Mail, he is also a past president of the Commonwealth Journalists' Association.

— Gemini News

Israel's 'Islamic' terrorist ties exposed

By Joseph Brewda

THE DIRECTOR general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Eitan Bentsur, has publicly admitted that Israel has been in contact with the "Islamic fundamentalist" Taleban regime in Afghanistan. He has also admitted that Israel has been in touch with the former government forces of Burhanuddin Rabbani, which the Taliban overthrew in 1996, but which still control the northern third of the country. This previously secret contact has not only involved separate meetings with Afghan diplomats from both camps, in Europe, the United States, and Israel, but also the transfer of hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Taleban regime, for "humanitarian purposes," Bentsur told the London Times on June 18, that Israel is intent on ensuring that it has good relations with whoever ultimately controls the country.

Bentsur's confession follows a mid-June exposé on Israel's "Afghan card," in the Foreign Report of London, which says that Israel became involved in Afghanistan in 1991, with the intent of setting up intelligence bases along the border with Iran, to aid in launching a strike against Iran's nuclear installations. On behalf of

that war plan, the report says, in recent months "Israel opened up two secret channels: the first with the previous Afghan government and the second with the present Taleban regime in Kabul," and that Israel "hopes that its Afghan ties will enable it to install listening devices and advanced spying equipment adjacent to the Iranian border." This report comes as the U.S. Zionist lobby continues to condemn the Clinton administration for attempting to improve relations with Iran, a nation that is supposedly "only months away" from acquiring nuclear weapons.

In a related deployment, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been trying to build up Israel's presence throughout Central Asia. According to the Saudi daily Hayat, Netanyahu is currently attempting to mediate between Tajikistan and Rabbani's forces across the border in Afghanistan which are largely composed of ethnic Tajiks. Also, Netanyahu met with Uzbek President Islam Karimov in Tashkent in May, to discuss Afghanistan and Iran, among other matters. The possibilities for outside meddling are great and

Uzbekistan, as well as Iran, have repeatedly warned about the dire effects the continuing war in neighbouring Afghanistan is having on their nations, and the region as a whole.

While British and Israeli coverage of these revelations focus on Israel's ambition to open up a new eastern front against Iran, and Arab coverage has emphasised the new evidence of Israeli penetration into oil-rich, Muslim Central Asia, the exposure's greatest importance is in further demonstrating Israeli patronage of "Islamic terrorism." Far from being something new to the region, as these papers have reported, Israel's involvement in Afghanistan dates back to at least 1980, when Britain and the United States gave Israel a franchise to train "Afghan mujahadeen" who were fighting Soviet occupation.

How terrorism really works

Following the 1988 Soviet pullout from Afghanistan, these mujahadeen "freedom fighters" were found to be expendable, and were dumped onto the job market — in the process, they were reclassified as "Islamic terrorists." About 10,000 of the mujahadeen were

Arab volunteers, who drifted back to North Africa and the Mideast, where many were recruited into indigenous "Islamic terrorist groups." But, the network as a whole remained under British, Israeli, and others' control — whatever its dupes might think — and constitutes the backbone of the British-run "Islamic terrorist international" today.

These mujahadeen veterans are also the core of the military forces of the deposed Afghan government of Rabbani, and the Taleban forces which replaced him. For such reasons, Afghan regions remain an important base of operations for the "Islamic terrorists" whom Britain uses to destabilise the Mideast, West Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent. They also give Netanyahu a pretext to justify his sabotage of the Oslo peace accord.

To this end, Afghanistan has become the headquarters for the main funder of this new "Islamic terrorist international," Saudi billionaire Osama Ben Laden, who, with his uncle, the late Salim Ben Laden, first began bankrolling the Afghan mujahadeen back in 1980, at the request of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and

Letters

Correction on cable project

To the editor:

I REFER to an article in the Jordan Times published on Aug. 4, 1998 (Jordanian). Egyptian electricity systems will integrate in October, official says and I would like to correct the last paragraph of that report.

In that paragraph you indicated the cost of part of the replaced cable — 600 metres — to \$72 million. Actually the cost of the whole of the maritime cable project linking the two countries is \$72 million.

Waddah Nabulsi
 Acting General
 The National Electric
 Power Company

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

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 By Annabel Ferriman
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I've lost my keys... I'm going mad

Memory loss amounts to the failure of a fallible filing system — but it can often be easily fixed

By Annabel Ferriman

INCREASED FORGETFULNESS as the years go by is disturbing partly because it is easy to panic and imagine the symptoms are a sign of something more serious. Medical experts, however, are reassuring about the problem. "People worry about it far more than necessary," says Dr. Christopher Martyn, of the MRC Environmental Epidemiology Unit, in Southampton, England. "They think their memory lapses are pathological, when they are quite normal."

To improve your memory, it is important to analyse why you forget things. Memory consists of three functions: registering new information, filing it away, and retrieving it. Your memory can fail because of weaknesses in any or all of these functions, and in some cases, the condition is eminently treatable.

If you are not registering new information properly, it could be because you are anxious or depressed. "When you have a patient who might be demented, the first thing to ask yourself is, is this person depressed?" says Dr. Martyn, who works part-time as a consultant neurologist at Southampton General Hospital. "Depression is as common as dementia in older people and can be treated."

In a pamphlet called *Memory and Dementia* produced by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, doctors provide helpful hints about taking things in. "You can't remember what you never heard or saw in the first place. So you need to keep yourself alert and make yourself notice the things that you need to. For instance, you may find it helpful to repeat the name of a person you have just met," it says.

Memory is all about paying attention, which can be a problem for people with short concentration spans. They can also suffer from what psychologists term "information overload" where they simply have too much information to process and file away. Some may fail to take things in because of alcohol, tranquillisers, chronic pain and head injuries, all of which can also affect retrieval.

Certain medical conditions also affect memory. An underactive thyroid gland slows down the whole body — including the brain — severe heart or lung disease starves the brain of oxygen, and both high and low levels of blood sugar in diabetes interfere with the way the brain works.

But by far the most common reason for memory loss is the normal process of ageing, which makes it harder for us to retrieve the information that we want from our filing systems. The best way to deal with it, says Dr. Martyn, is to cheat: "Sometimes people confront these problems head on, instead of thinking of ways round the problem. The easiest way to



The normal process of ageing makes it increasingly difficult to extract things from our mental filing cabinets (photo by John Lawrence)

deal with memory loss is to out-flank it. If you cannot remember what you should be doing, for example, keep a diary."

Dr. Martyn's booklet, *Forgetfulness and Dementia* (Family Doctor series) has a dozen different tips on how to sidestep the problem, from always keeping a notebook with you for writing down tasks, to labelling cupboards and drawers, and deciding on a particular place for articles that you frequently lose.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence to suggest that if you constantly exercise your brain with games and puzzles, it keeps your brain alert every area. It will help you to remain good at the particular game or puzzle that you do, but it will not keep you as capable of learning a new language or musical instrument as you were when you were 30.

Patrick Rabbitt, professor of cognitive gerontology at the University of Manchester, has carried out extensive research in this area and claims that it is not all bad news. "We got two groups of people together, one group in their early 80s and the other in their 50s, who were equally fast in doing cryptic crosswords and compared them in various ways," he says. Although they were equally good

at crosswords, the older group did not perform nearly as well in intelligence tests. "What we seem to have found is that, if you go on practising some particular skills, you can maintain your competence in that skill into old age, but it does not seem to generalise to other areas."

The good news was that the rate at which the two groups improved with practice was comparable. Both groups improved enormously over 36 weeks and the difference between a practised elderly person and an unpractised younger person was enormous.

But although doing endless mental puzzles does not keep your brain in all-around tip-top condition, there are certain things you can do to try to keep your memory as good as possible. "Unfortunately, they are all the usual boring things, like keeping your weight down, taking regular exercise, not smoking and only drinking homeopathic amounts of alcohol," Professor Rabbitt says.

Alzheimer's disease, however, is a different prospect. There appears to be little you can do to prevent it and the strong genetic component means that certain people seem destined to develop it. The only consolation is that it is still comparatively rare. One in five people

over 80 suffers from dementia (of which Alzheimer's is the commonest cause), but that still means four out of five do not.

Professor Howard Jacobs, of the endocrinology department at Middlesex Hospital, says: "There is some evidence that taking hormone replacement therapy may delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease — four out of five recent studies showed it to be useful — but it is too early to recommend it as a proven preventive measure."

The disease can usually be distinguished from normal age-associated memory impairment (AAMI) because it is often accompanied by change in personality (the victim becoming irritable, withdrawn, rude, scruffy, idle or suspicious) and by difficulty with skills learnt early in life, such as dressing and using a knife and fork.

Despite investing a huge amount of money in Alzheimer's research, the pharmaceutical industry has yet to find a cure. The new drug, Aricept, for example, which was launched in Britain last year, is only of limited use. The herb industry and the supplement manufacturers are making dramatic claims for the ginkgo leaf, but large-scale studies are still needed. So if an elderly relative seems to

be developing really serious memory loss and personality changes, the best course of action is to have them thoroughly investigated to rule out other causes, such as the presence of tumours, stroke or blood clots, some of which can be treated.

If your relative definitely has Alzheimer's, there are one or two practical techniques that can help, such as keeping them in familiar surroundings and practising "reality orientation," in which the helper constantly tells the sufferer the day, date, time and what is happening. According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, "it is a bit tedious but, up to a point, it works."

Of course, there are certain advantages in not remembering everything. The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said that it meant he could enjoy many things over and over again. As if for the first time, Dr. Christopher Martyn also says forgetting is a useful process to stop the brain getting too cluttered: "Your brain stores what it considers important and discards what is trivial."

'Memory and Dementia' available free (with an SAE) from Royal College of Psychiatrists, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG.

How reliable is your memory?

Circle the number (1-4)
1= Never or hardly ever (a few times a year or less)
2= Occasionally (a few times each month)
3= Often (a few times a week)
4= Very frequently (every day)

birth or where you live?

1 2 3 4

How often do you find yourself...

1. Forgetting where you have put something around the house?

1 2 3 4

2. Failing to recognise places that you are told you have often been to before?

1 2 3 4

3. Having to go back to check whether you have done something that you meant to do?

1 2 3 4

4. Forgetting to take something with you when you go out?

1 2 3 4

5. Forgetting that you were told something yesterday or a few days ago, and maybe having to be reminded about it?

1 2 3 4

6. Failing to recognise, by sight, close relatives or friends that you meet frequently?

1 2 3 4

7. When reading a newspaper or magazine being unable to follow the thread of a story; losing track of what it is about?

1 2 3 4

8. Forgetting to tell somebody something important. Perhaps forgetting to pass on a message or remind someone of something?

1 2 3 4

9. Forgetting important details about yourself — for example, your date of

10. Getting the details of what someone has told you mixed up and confused?

1 2 3 4

11. Forgetting where things are normally kept or looking for them in the wrong place?

1 2 3 4

12. Getting lost or turning in the wrong direction on a journey, a walk, or in a building where you have often been before?

1 2 3 4

13. Doing some routine thing twice by mistake. For example, putting two lots of tea in the teapot or going to brush your hair when you have just done so?

1 2 3 4

14. Repeating to someone what you have just told them or asking them the same question twice?

1 2 3 4

Score:
14-19 Your memory is excellent.

20-29 Your memory is average but you might find advice on memory aids useful.

30-39 Your memory is below average. This may simply mean that you lead a very busy life.

40-56 Your memory is very poor. Frequent memory lapses are likely to have a serious effect on the way you cope with daily life. There may be several reasons for this, but it would be sensible to discuss it with your GP.

Taken from: *'Understanding Forgetfulness and Dementia'* by Dr. CN Martyn and Catharine Gale. Family Doctor series. £2.49.

— The Independent

After Viagra for men, now sex pills for women

By Gisela Ostwald

With increasing age, circulatory disturbances impair female arousal in the same way as that of the male.

NEW YORK — After the stunning success of the male impotency pill Viagra, the pharmaceutical industry is stepping up its efforts to help women with sex problems. At least six companies in the United States are developing pills and plasters to stimulate the female libido or increase the flow of blood to the genitals.

Female sexual disturbances, ranging from a lack of interest in sexual intercourse to inability to have an orgasm — have in the past usually been ascribed to emotional causes. Now the industry seems determined to open up a further market.

U.S. universities, too, are dedicating themselves to the complex subject of female sexuality.

In laboratory experiments on animals, Irwin Goldstein of Boston University succeeded in proving that with increasing age circulatory disturbances impair female arousal in the same way as that of the male. Goldstein induced arteriosclerosis in female rabbits and found that this led to a sharp reduction in their sexual reactions.

If his theory is confirmed by fur-

ther experiments, women would be just as suitable candidates for Viagra treatment as men, the Wall Street Journal commented recently.

Pfizer Inc. of New York is currently testing Viagra, the blue pill which has sold better than any new drug ever before, on 500 women in Britain. Other U.S. firms are following the same trail.

Pentech Pharmaceuticals, in a joint venture with Abbott Laboratories, Takeda Chemical Industries of Japan and Zonagen, are developing other substances to stimulate the flow of blood and with it female desire. Major studies are in the pipeline.

More controversial is the idea of treatment with the male hormone testosterone. True, the female organism produces it too, but in much smaller quantities. With the menopause the female testosterone level drops even further, by up to 50 per cent.

In her book *"The Hormone of Desire"*, psychiatrist Susan Rako suggests that a flagging interest in sex and a lack of zest for life are both consequences of this decline in the testosterone level.

The U.S. company Solvay Pharmaceuticals has for years been selling Estratest, a testosterone pill, to treat menopausal symptoms. It now plans to test the drug as a means of

enhancing sexual desire.

TheraTech Inc. is planning to launch a testosterone plaster, and the National Institutes of Health Research are looking into the hormone's effect.

Barbara Sherwin, a psychologist and professor of gynaecology at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, accused critics of testosterone therapy of prejudice.

In an article in the *New York Times*, she said even some doctors still believed the hormone turned women into men, causing them to develop beards, a deep voice and aggressive behaviour.

However, if properly administered as a drug, the hormone only restored the body's testosterone to its natural pre-menopause level. Critics, however, say it can also cause acne and cardiac problems.

While medical research scientists are racking their brains over the side-effects of future sex pills and plasters, many women have been using their own initiative.

Lawrence Hakim, director of the Centre for Sexual Disturbances and Infertility at the University of Miami, told the newspaper *USA Today* that "hundreds of women" attending his clinic had asked for Viagra.

— Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Our potions beat Viagra, say Cairo quacks

By Adel Darwish

CAIRO — Haj Ahmad Barawi sat puffing on his argileh (water pipe), grinning at Azzizah, a woman in her thirties who was queuing in front of his herb and spice store.

"Who needs the American blue pill?" said Haj Ahmad with a wink, using the Egyptian slang for Viagra. Pointing to the hundreds of multi-coloured jars and bottles climbing in dark mahogany cabinets to the ceiling of his tiny shop, he went on slyly: "We have what blessed your mother and grandmother, making them roll in happiness for many nights."

The woman blushed and frowned, before being infected by the giggles spreading down the queue. "Behave yourself, Haj," she said, playfully smacking the old man on his shoulder. "I am only here to buy mughat for my sister-in-law. She has just had a baby."

The shop owner ordered his assistant to give her two ounces of the herb, but added: "Take a green jar for

your husband, then praise Allah, and thank me." This brought more giggles from the line of women they all knew well at Azzizah, just like them, was really after.

Viagra has been banned from sale in Egypt by the health ministry, generating a dispute with pharmacists who claim to have lost £50m-worth of sales to black-market importers and attarin (herbalists) such as Haj Ahmad. "Thank Allah," he said. "That blue pill is bad for the heart and the soul, but our wasfah [a herbal prescription favoured by quacks] has worked miracles for hundreds of years."

"There is a black market for Viagra in Egypt," said Nabil Sharbawie, a fertility specialist, "but most Egyptians go to attarin quacks for herbal alternatives." There has been a sudden rush to their shops in the narrow alleyways of Al-Guhria, the medieval quarter of east Cairo celebrated in the novels of Naguib Mahfouz, Egypt's Nobel Prize winner for literature. Air-conditioning units are beginning to displace

the slow ceiling fans battling the warm air, but in the attarin establishments there are few other concessions to modernity. For the past 1,000 years, they have dispensed their potions here to seekers of beauty and romance. Whether it is rounding and firming a young woman's breasts — "better than a Wonderbra," says Haj Ahmad — or boosting the sexual desire of a lover, he will find the right wasfah in one of his tiny mahogany drawers. None of them has a label; knowledge of the contents is a secret passed from father to son.

The women queuing in this medieval setting shielded their faces behind Gucci-style handbags, fashionable sunglasses, and silk scarves — more to conceal their identity than because of Islamic modesty. They paid 200 Egyptian pounds (£35) for tiny jars of "Elixir of Life", "Hell's Stone" or "Nerve Charger", herbal potions to give to their men. Others asked for shirsh el-zaloub, the root of a herb that grows in the mountains of

Lebanon.

"The female shirsh, which looks like a woman's genitals, is used to restore men's potency, while the male herb, which looks like a man's genitalia, is given to women. It works better than Viagra," said Al-Mu'ez Eiad, whose grandfather taught him the secrets of love potions after learning them from his great-grandfather. In his shop, which has been in the family for 300 years, assistants were preparing small parcels containing jars of "Masculine Potion" or "Seed of Romance," and handing them to couriers sent by masters who were unwilling to be seen in the market.

Eiad believes the boom will continue, even when the government permits the sale of Viagra. Men still prefer buying his wasfah, he claims, to talking to their doctor. "No man can hold his head high after saying to the doctor: 'Please give me some Viagra so that I can keep my woman.'"

— The Independent

Sale of imported bottled water still pending health quality tests

By Ghalia Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The sale of one and a half million litres of imported bottled water, postponed for the second time this week, awaits health ministry test results to ensure the water meets local specifications.

Bottled water, imported from Saudi Arabia and Syria, was scheduled to go on sale last Saturday to meet soaring demand caused by a six-week-old water contamination and shortage crisis.

But a source at the supply ministry said test results of water samples are yet to be completed by the health ministry. The bottled water arrived

in the Kingdom on Saturday. "After we receive the results, we will start selling the water," the source said.

One litre of imported drinking water will be sold at 300 fils. The ministry said it could import more bottled water if the need persists.

The decision to buy bottled water, following a decades-old ban, was apparently taken to break a thriving black market business. But the government's move has angered Jordan's JD15 million water bottling industry working around-the-clock to meet unprecedented demand.

Ministry of Supply Secretary-General Mohammad Smadi said the imported water

will only be sold from government-run warehouses in Amman, and not through private supermarkets and stores selling water supplied by the five local bottlers, who now produce 250,000 litres a day.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday said domestic water supplies flowing from the Zai Water Treatment Plant (ZWP) were safe and fit for human consumption.

"I assure citizens that every single drop of water leaving ZWP is drinkable," he said.

Majali added that intermittent tap water supplies would return to normal after maintenance work at the ZWP, supplying 40 per cent of Amman's water needs, was

completed. ZWP was closed temporarily at dawn on Saturday after staff noticed increased levels of organic substances, mainly algae, in the water.

While assuring the public that the quality of domestic water supplies was in line with standards set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Health Minister Ashraf Kirdi advised citizens to boil the water for a few minutes before drinking it. Smadi defended his ministry's decision to import water saying it wanted to prevent hoarding of supplies by traders seeking to make quick and higher profits.

Residents have complained that several traders were stocking local bottled water to sell it later at black market rates or were selling them smuggled bottled water at higher prices.

Jordan's water bottlers, thus far enjoying protectionism, said the decision to import water will harm the industry because demand will drop after the water crisis is over and the increased supply will glut the market.

"Officials should not base their decisions on circumstances caused by an emergency situation," said an executive at a local water bottling firm. "The present five bottling factories can handle up to three times the market's needs."

Israeli tourism mired in a 2-year slump

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's tourism industry, once able to bounce back quickly from the fallout of violence and wars, is mired in a two-year-old slump which industry officials blame on deadlocked Middle East peace-making.

"This is the longest and most difficult crisis ever," said Dan Yarden, chief economist of the Israeli Hotel Association. Foreign tourist arrivals usually drop sharply after a major security incident and then pick up again after a few months.

But tourism to Israel has been in the doldrums since a wave of suicide bombings by militants in March 1996.

Arrivals have dropped six per cent annually on average for the last three years, or a total of about 20 per cent, Yarden said. Hotel occupancy rates are running at an estimated 57.4 per cent this year,

down from a 1995 peak of 68.1 per cent.

"All the hotels in Israel are losing money," Rappi Weiner, general manager of Sheraton Israel, told a tourism industry conference late last month.

"Since 1996 the hotels have been working to cut expenses. In the last one and a half years we've fired 5,000 employees," he said.

According to the association's figures, revenue from foreign tourism topped \$3.4 billion in 1995, was down to \$3.2 billion in 1997 and is estimated at \$3.0 billion for this year.

The industry's hope that the Middle East peace process would smooth out the bumps in tourist arrivals seemed to be on target after Israeli-Arab talks got under way in 1991. Arrivals grew steadily to a record 2.5 million in 1995.

Industry officials lay part of the blame for the prolonged slump on high local prices, but first and foremost they point to the deadlocked peace process.

"Security-wise we are in a relatively quiet period. What is influencing this crisis is the message Israel is transmitting to the outside world, in terms of not implementing the peace accords (with the Palestinians)," said Yarden.

Israel's negotiating stance towards the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab World is widely seen as having hardened since the election of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in May 1996, shortly after the bus bombings.

A scheduled Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank is way past deadline and Israel's relations with the Arab World have deteriorated. "There is no doubt that when

there are attacks on the background of a peace process then the influence is much smaller than when there are no talks," said Shabtai Shai, director-general at the Tourism Ministry.

Recent figures show an upturn in tourism, but industry officials are not optimistic that the numbers point to a turnaround.

Overnight stays in hotels were up eight per cent in June from a year ago, but for the first half of the year they were down 12 per cent.

"The figure is still 14 per cent lower than what it was in June 1995. And the January-June figure is 23 per cent lower than in 1996," Yarden said. "One swallow does not mean spring. We cannot say we are past the turning point."

Industry leaders are placing their hopes on the year 2000, when optimists are expecting

up to four million pilgrims to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the Holy Land.

"The only chance to exit this crisis is the year 2000," Shai said at a conference.

But some in the industry remain sceptical, noting that the expectations for a flood of visitors to mark the 50th anniversary this year of Israel's founding failed to materialise.

"The celebrations for Israel's 50 years of independence did not meet expectations," said Nira Drot, managing director of British Airways Israel, who said the airline might not include Israel in its publicity brochure for the year 2000.

Shai said a lot depended on Middle East peace. "These difficulties will end, because we have a good product. We need better geopolitical conditions and then the position will be better," he said.

Russia devalues rouble, shaking markets, political world

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia caved in Monday to huge pressure on the rouble, announcing a de facto devaluation which sent a chill wind through domestic and global stock markets and threatened a major political shake-up in Moscow.

President Boris Yeltsin bolted back to Moscow from a holiday retreat in northwest Russia for urgent consultations with Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko, after the government admitted it could no longer defend the rouble at its current dollar peg.

The central bank raised the upper limit at which it is prepared to support the rouble to 9.5 to the greenback, while the lower limit was set at six. Previously the government

had pegged the rouble at 6.2 to the dollar, with a fluctuation margin of 15 per cent either way.

The government also declared a 90-day moratorium on repayment of foreign debt, suspended trading in short-term domestic debt instruments, imposed controls over currency flows abroad, and said that government bonds would be restructured into new debt instruments based on the new rouble rate.

The announcements touched off panic on Russia's financial markets, already spooked by weeks of devaluation speculation and months of anxiety that Russia, with its broke government and mounting debt, could be the

next emerging market domino to topple.

Trading was initially suspended amid near-hysterical conditions on equity and currency exchanges, and stocks ended down a glum five per cent. The rouble changed hands at 6.43 to the dollar in interbank trade, though volumes were so thin that one trader said the rate was "non-sense".

On the streets, the dollar was fetching as much as 8.50 roubles, while traders spoke of a theoretical market rate nearer 7.1.

Further afield, the de facto devaluation bore down on stock prices from Tokyo to Paris, Singapore to London and Bangkok to Frankfurt as concerns spread of another

round of Asian currency depreciations following Moscow's move on the rouble.

Kiriyenko insisted Monday that the move did not amount to the devaluation which Moscow has repeatedly forewarned. He said the new currency policy merely amounted to a "crawling peg," that would "respond more flexibly to the situation on the market."

But the besieged premier, who has spent his entire four months at the helm trying to plug a fiscal hole which has translated into a full-blown financial crisis, did not rule out cabinet changes as a result of the policy about-face.

Political analysts were

quickly anticipating that fallout from the monetary meltdown would affect government and Kremlin officials.

"The stock of pro-reform forces fell sharply today," said Yuri Koryunov, an analyst with the INDEM research institute. "People will say these six years have gone to waste. It will be hard for them to say they managed to improve things before the 2000 presidential elections roll around."

But the immediate outcome was the promotion of one of the most ardent reformers of post-Soviet Russia, Boris Fyodorov, to deputy prime minister.

(Continued on page 9)

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7923	0.6185	1.5015	146.23	1.6232	1768.08	2.0219	6.0110
DE Mark	0.5679	-	0.3448	0.8377	81.53	0.8498	986.84	1.1282	3.3624
GB Sterling	1.6168	2.8996	-	2.4287	238.45	2.4627	2861.11	3.2704	9.7204
CH Franc	0.6660	119.30	0.4113	-	97.33	1.0137	1177.35	134.58	3.9990
JP Yen	0.0068	1.2261	0.4230	1.0274	-	1.0422	1270.80	1.4551	4.3285
CA Dollar	0.6885	1.2916	0.4225	1.0586	1.04	-	1270.80	1.4551	4.3285
IL Lira	0.0006	1.0137	0.3495	0.8849	1211.53	0.8812	-	11.43	3.3976
NL Guilder	0.4946	88.60	0.3055	74.27	72.22	0.7629	873.74	-	2.9703
FR Franc	0.1664	0.2883	0.1029	24.9829	24.31	0.2534	33.63	33.6300	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7507	0.3770	3.6400	0.3073	3.6729	1618.00	3.4220
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2901	0.5317	5.1340	0.4334	5.1804	2141.04	4.8288
Saudi Riyal	0.2656	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.97	0.8819	0.98	404.72	0.9124
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8805	9.9488	-	9.86	0.8161	9.74	4026.63	9.0769
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0844	1.01	417.03	0.9401
Kuwait Dinar	3.2541	2.3072	12.2083	1.2258	11.85	-	11.95	4938.80	0.9401
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0226	0.9910	0.0837	-	413.30	0.9317
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4671	2.4708	0.2484	2.3979	0.2024	2.4196	-	2.2543
Egyptian	0.2922	0.2072	1.0861	0.1102	1.0637	0.0898	1.0733	443.60	-

Energy									
Oils	Last	Previous							
Brent	0.00	0.00							
W. Texas	13.40	13.37							
Bonny	0.00	0.00							
Dubai	12.35	12.63							
UL Gas	135.00	133.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2656	0.4781	0.1649	0.40062	39.7788				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48828	0.1684	0.4091	39.7916				
KW Dinar	3.2541	5.83431	2.01288	4.88998	476.611				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.75737	1.64069	3.98565	387.687				
CY Pound	1.8989	3.3919	1.1699	2.8418	276.726				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	284.3	284.8							
Silver (oz's)	5.13	5.16							
Platinum (oz's)	366	368							
AL (3 Months)	1323	1325							
CU (3 Months)	1622	1626							
Zinc (3 Months)	1036	1039							
Lead (3 Months)	581	584							
Ni (3 Months)	4090	4100							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	8402.6	-22.4	-0.27	8434.79	8368.62	8425		
New York	S&P 500	1069.19	-3.56	-0.33	1082.75	1055.08	1062.78		
London	FT-SE 100	5468.4	13.4	0.25	5468.4	5398	5466		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	14794.66	-329.27	-2.18	15137.7	14656.57	15123.9		
Paris	CAC 40	3973.81	-21.1	-0.53	3987.38	3923.48	3994.91		
Frankfurt	DAX	5402.3	-45.6	-0.84	5425.64	5336.2	5447.9		

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

UMS wins Asria Dairy Co. account

UMS (United Media Services) recently won the account for ADC (Asria Dairy Company) which is a member of the prominent Alayyan Group.

Alayyan Group was formed in 1958, and currently incorporates Alayyan Trading Company, Unity Trading Establishment-Hyndai and Asria Dairy Company. Alayyan Group employs

a total of 500 people.

Established in 1995, Asria is widely known as a quality provider of a wide range of dairy products and juices, including UHT products, yogurt, labaneh, a variety of cheeses, ice-creams, and fruit juices, all made from natural and fresh ingredients.

Asria's main objective is to achieve quality excel-

lence and maintain consumer satisfaction. Asria's factory is capable of meeting the growing demand in the Jordanian market through using sophisticated, state-of-the-art equipment and implementing the most developed production methods applied by the most distinguished producers of dairy products in the world.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Cause anxiety
- Bridge coup
- Groin
- Jewels Fr.
- Roman garb
- Grace ending
- Pirate Edward
- Teach
- Harbor
- Serving of com
- Lunar explorer
- Melody
- Quantity of moonshine
- Martini
- More smooth and glossy
- Program paid for by FICA
- Vesuvius flow
- Running behind
- From now to then
- Related (to)
- Outer covering
- Gambling game
- Ball VIP
- Business transaction
- Remove wrinkles
- Say more
- Operation before painting
- Shades-of-gray photo
- Way cool
- Norwegian king
- Floating
- Lemon drink
- Valley, CA
- Stevenson's prate
- Ordary
- Fortlet
- Lab containers
- Concerning
- Aswan's river
- Borden's cow

DOWN

- French clem
- Actress
- Katrina
- Partly open
- Mymical bird
- Eslemo boot
- British gen
- Burdens
- Go along with
- Indian fabric
- Pirate hanged in 1701
- Love: Fr.
- Captain
- Nemo's creator
- Go in
- Breakfast rings
- Pirate
- pardoned after War of 1812
- Tallahassee
- Thick place
- Body of water
- Wicked
- College cheers
- Brewed beverage
- Gullwing wings
- Actress Garr
- Phry to
- Adjective for 64A
- Gains wisdom
- NYC summer
- One of The Judds
- Indigenous
- Mubarak of Egypt
- Green-card holder
- Truman's birthplace
- One of The Judds
- Berry more or
- Walters
- Actress Baxter
- Ms. Gardner and others
- Sub shop
- Highland tongue
- Alcher

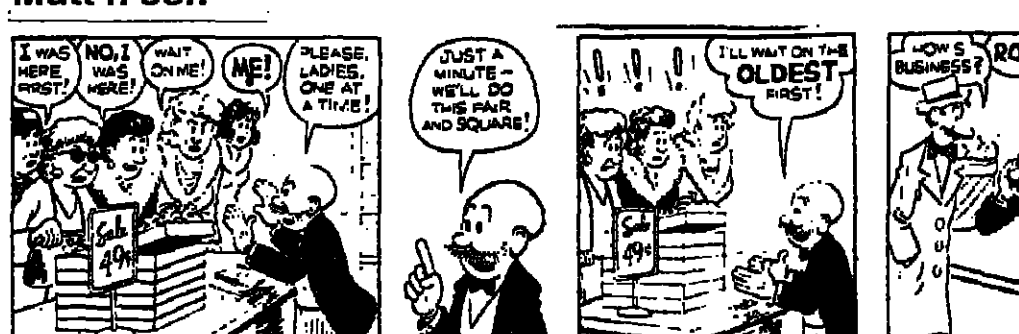
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

EPPIR

HINEW

ROHRO

TAPECK

Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: WHEAT OWING SMUDGE UPPOUR Answer: Why the tailor had trouble fitting the wrestler — HE WAS TOUGH TO PIN

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Government compiles comprehensive data about the overall performance of the insurance sector during 1997

**** THE INSURANCE** companies operating in Jordan recorded a combined net profit of JD6.3 million last year whereas the net profit generated by the various insurance departments of these companies amounted to only JD2.5 million. This overall result was revealed in a report prepared by the Insurance Control Department at the Ministry of Industrial and Trade covering the insurance operations in the Kingdom during 1997.

The report showed a growth in the premiums realised by the insurance departments of the 26 companies operating in the country as the total increased from JD89.7 million in 1996 to 90.2 million in 1997. Premiums realised from the general insurance departments (fire, marine, general accidents and vehicles) were lower in 1997 as they dropped by 2.4 per cent from JD71.6 million to JD69.9 million.

Premiums realised by life insurance departments were higher by 12.1 per cent totalling JD20.3 million compared to a JD18.2 million total in 1996. The share of reinsurers in the life category was consequently higher by 14 per cent at JD4.9 million (JD4.3 million in 1996).

The insurance companies in Jordan kept JD15.3 million of the premiums in 1997, 10.8 per cent more than the JD13.8 million they kept in 1996.

The share of reinsurers from the general insurance departments amounted to JD26.6 million last year, 5.3 per cent less than the JD28.1 million share for 1996. As such, the amounts that the insurance companies kept in the Kingdom were JD58 million compared to JD55 million in 1996.

The report pointed out that paid claims last year amounted to JD53.6 million, 11.7 per cent higher than the JD48 million paid

claims in 1996. Of this amount, the paid claims in the general insurance category totalled JD44.5 million, 11.2 per cent above the JD40 million of paid claims in 1996. The paid claims in the life insurance category were higher by 15.2 per cent last year as they totalled JD9.1 million compared to JD7.9 million in 1997.

The share of reinsurers of the paid claims was JD17.2 million in 1997, 3.6 per cent higher than the JD16.6 million share in 1996. Of this amount, JD13.4 million were related to the general insurance and JD3.8 million to the life insurance. In 1996, the amount were JD13.6 million and 3.1 million respectively. The share of the insurance companies of all the paid claims for all insurance activities amounted to JD36.4 million, 15.9 per cent higher than the JD31.4 million recorded during 1996.

According to the report, the overall shareholders equity in all the insurance companies amounted to JD70.6 million, 20 per cent higher than the JD59 million total in 1996. Overall technical reserves went up by seven per cent to JD59.5 million (JD55.6 million in 1996). Paid-up capital climbed 35 per cent from JD37.7 million to JD51 million at the end of 1997.

Finally, the report showed that the total assets of all companies was JD177.6 million, 11.6 per cent higher than the JD159.1 million total in 1996. Current assets accounted for 51.6 per cent of the total assets. Total investments of the insurance sector rose by 16.6 per cent last year moving from JD107 million in 1996 to JD124.8 million at the end of 1997. Return on investment totalled JD4 million compared to JD3.7 million in 1996 (Al Ra'i).

Safa consortium plans \$20m spa projects in Jordan, Mideast

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing Safa Dead Sea Consortium grouping U.S. and Jordanian firms has presented to Tourism and Antiquities Minister Aqel Biltaji a plan for establishing a network of spas in Jordan and other countries employing salt and mud found in the Dead Sea to be used for therapeutic purposes.

The delegation which met the minister at his office Monday said the consortium has allocated \$20 million to carry out this project.

Joel Lebewitz and Mohammad Omar Sabri, who represent the Jordanian-American consortium, heard from Biltaji

a briefing about the investment climate in Jordan and the religious, therapeutic and desert tourism in the country.

Biltaji spoke at length about the beneficial effects of the Dead Sea water and about mineral springs located on the eastern side of the Jordan Rift Valley. He also outlined the ministry's tourism programmes marking the beginning of the second millennium, noting that these programmes will boost the Jordanian tourism industry.

The Safa consortium delegation had earlier met with Saleh Rifai, director general of the Zira holding company which is one of the leading firms specialis-



Biltaji (left) discusses spa projects with the two members of the delegation

ing in tourism and hotel management industries. They discussed areas for investments especially in spas to be set up at the Dead Sea and Al Himmeah mineral springs. The delegation will today meet Dureid Mahasneh, director general of the Jordan Valley Authority to discuss arrangements and facilities that the authority can offer in order to attract investors for projects in the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley. The consortium plans to set up spas not only in the

Dead Sea and Al Himmeah but also in Al Ghardaqa in Egypt, Qatar and Dubai. The spas to be set up at these locations will depend on the salt and mud extracted from the Dead Sea for their therapeutic services.

Russia devalues rouble

(Continued from page 8)

Fyodorov will keep his crucial present job of tax chief. An early scapegoat was Alexander Livshits, President Boris Yeltsin's economic advisor, who tendered his resignation.

Though Monday's monetary move will ease the pressure on a central bank which has been spending a billion dollars a week recently to defend the rouble, the banking sector was in danger of implosion, economists said. "The banking sector could suffer quite severely because of their loans and their positions," said Peter Westin, an economist with the Russia-Europe Centre for Economic Policy. "My concern is also that... as imports get more expensive, inflation could return."

In a bid to shore up part of the banking sector, the government announced plans to create an inner sanctum of 12 of Russia's largest banks, who would cooperate with the central bank to help avert financial collapse, the government announced Monday.

The International Monetary Fund, which last month led a \$22.6-billion two-year bailout for Russia, also hinted that it was right behind the government's latest monetary move.

As top-level IMF team touched down in Moscow for talks with senior government officials, IMF managing director Michel Camdessus said that Monday's surprise measures were aimed at "restoring confidence" in Russia's financial system. The United States said the move was exceptional, though not precedent-setting.

But ratings agencies were less forgiving. Fitch IBCA and Standard and Poor's downgrading credit ratings. The government moreover admitted Monday that it would only be able to defend its new currency corridor if it received "legislative support" in its efforts to face the financial crisis head on.

Occidental to raise its Qatar oil output

DOHA (R) — Occidental Petroleum Corp. has said it planned to develop a new offshore oil field in Qatar which would add 50,000 barrels per day (bpd) to its production from the Arab Gulf state by 2001.

A company statement said development of the Idd Al-Shargi South Dome field would start in early 1999 and production would peak at 50,000 bpd in 2001.

The U.S. company currently produces about 121,000 bpd from Idd El-Shargi North Dome field.

Occidental took over the operation of the North Dome field from state-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corp. (QGPC) in 1994 under a 25-year development and production sharing agreement.

"The cumulative production since October 1994... surpassed 100 million barrels from Idd El-Shargi North Dome) on August 7, 1998, and daily production is currently averaging more than 121,000 barrels, an increase of more than 400 per cent since January 1995," the statement said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 1998

By Glasbergen

Monday (August 17): A matter pertaining to your work or studies is the focus of your thoughts. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Tuesday (August 18): The moon is in Cancer and you're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Wednesday (August 19): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Thursday (August 20): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Friday (August 21): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Saturday (August 22): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Sunday (August 23): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Monday (August 24): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Tuesday (August 25): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Wednesday (August 26): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Thursday (August 27): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Friday (August 28): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Saturday (August 29): You're learning fast and your mind is sharp. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

Sunday (August 30): You're feeling a bit emotional. If you're not sure about it, don't worry about it. If you're sure, go ahead and do it. Stick with what you know. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice. If you're not sure, ask for advice.

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European Athletics Championships

Masterkova and Kipketer add world class

BUDAPEST (AFP) — The European Athletics Championships, which start here on Tuesday, may be missing the dominant forces in world athletics namely the Africans and the Americans but in Russia's Svetlana Masterkova and Wilson Kipketer of Denmark they possess two of the finest athletes of the 90's.

Masterkova and Kipketer, who are world record holders in the mile and 800 metres respectively, should more than make up for the evident lack of quality in other events such as the men's distance races and the men's 100 metres, which will boast a new winner for the first time since 1986 owing to Linford Christie's retirement.

Masterkova, who burst onto the scene at the relatively advanced age of 28 to take Olympic gold in both the 800 and 1500 metres in Atlanta, is competing in her first Europeans and while other athletes like pole vaulting legend Sergei Bubka have decided to give it a miss she wants to make up for the disappointment of last year's world championships in Athens.

"I was carrying an injury and despite hoping I would be able to run it off it just got worse and by the 1500 semi-final I realised it was not going to be my title," the 30-year-old said.

"Thus these championships are very important to me as it gives me a chance to add a European title to my Olympic and Goodwill one's

with the chance of the cleansweep next year in the world's and also to erase the frustrating memories of last year," she added.

However, Masterkova, who is married to former professional cyclist Assiat Saitov, will face a real battle as she comes up against world champion Carla Sacramento of Portugal and the diminutive Romanian, Gabriela Szabo, who handed the Russian her only defeat of the season in Monaco 10 days ago.

Masterkova, though, firmly scotched any ideas that she might have peaked too early when she avenged that defeat in Zurich last Wednesday and then set aside any thoughts her rivals might have had about replacing her at the top of the tree.

"I just wanted to show who was boss," she said.

Kipketer, the Kenyan-born naturalised Dane, faces a different type of challenge in that it is not so much the opposition he has got to beat, which with the withdrawal of Norway's 1996 Olympic champion Vegbrun Rodal leaves it looking less than competitive, but more if he has recovered strongly enough from the severe bout of malaria he picked up on a visit to Kenya earlier in the year.

Kipketer, who is said to be 25 although he was once credited as being born in 1968, looked weak when he failed to respond to rising

Kenyan youngster Japheth Kimutai in Zurich, going down to his first defeat since September 1995.

"I almost expected that defeat because I am so far behind the others in my training on account of my illness," he said.

However, it is hard to imagine that even a well below par Kipketer, who showed his class by turning up almost on a whim and broke the world indoor 800 metres record in March 1997 despite not having trained for the event, will lose out on a first European crown.

While Kipketer and Masterkova attempt to win their first European titles German veteran Heike Drechsler will become only the third athlete to win four individual European titles in the same event if she takes the women's long jump.

The 33-year-old former East German star, who made her first legally wind assisted jump of over 7 metres in three years in Zurich behind Marion Jones, should enjoy a classic duel with Italy's English-born 1995 world champion Fiona May, although Drechsler sounded almost as confident as Masterkova did after the Grand Prix meeting.

"I've come through two terrible years of injuries and had operations on both my achilles tendons and now I feel my confidence flooding back, and that's what a lot of our event is about ... confidence," the three time holder of the long jump world record said.

The other event that should be of the highest standard will be the men's 400 metres, which could bring a Great Britain 1-2-3 and also see Drechsler's former East German teammate Thomas Schonlebe's 11-year-old European record consigned to history.

The man deemed most likely to take the title and the record is 26-year-old Mark Richardson, who beat double Olympic champion and world 400 metres titleholder Michael Johnson in Oslo earlier on the season.

Richardson, who won a world 4x400 relay gold in Tokyo in 1991 where he was a reserve, has twice run 44.37 seconds this season just four hundredths of a second off Schonlebe's record and with compatriots Iwan Thomas and the unpredictable Solomon Wariso, who claimed the last ticket ahead of British 400 metres icon Roger Black, chasing him all the way this looks like being a cracker of a race.

The absence of Bubka and several other leading European lights illustrates how the Europeans have lost a lot of their prestige over the past decade but just one outstanding performance from any of the above over the coming week will go a long way towards restoring their rather grey image to a golden hue of eras past.

Davenport beats Hingis to extend win streak

MANHATTAN BEACH, California (AFP) — Second-ranked Lindsay Davenport beat world number one Martina Hingis 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, here Sunday to win her 12th consecutive match and third WTA tournament in a row.

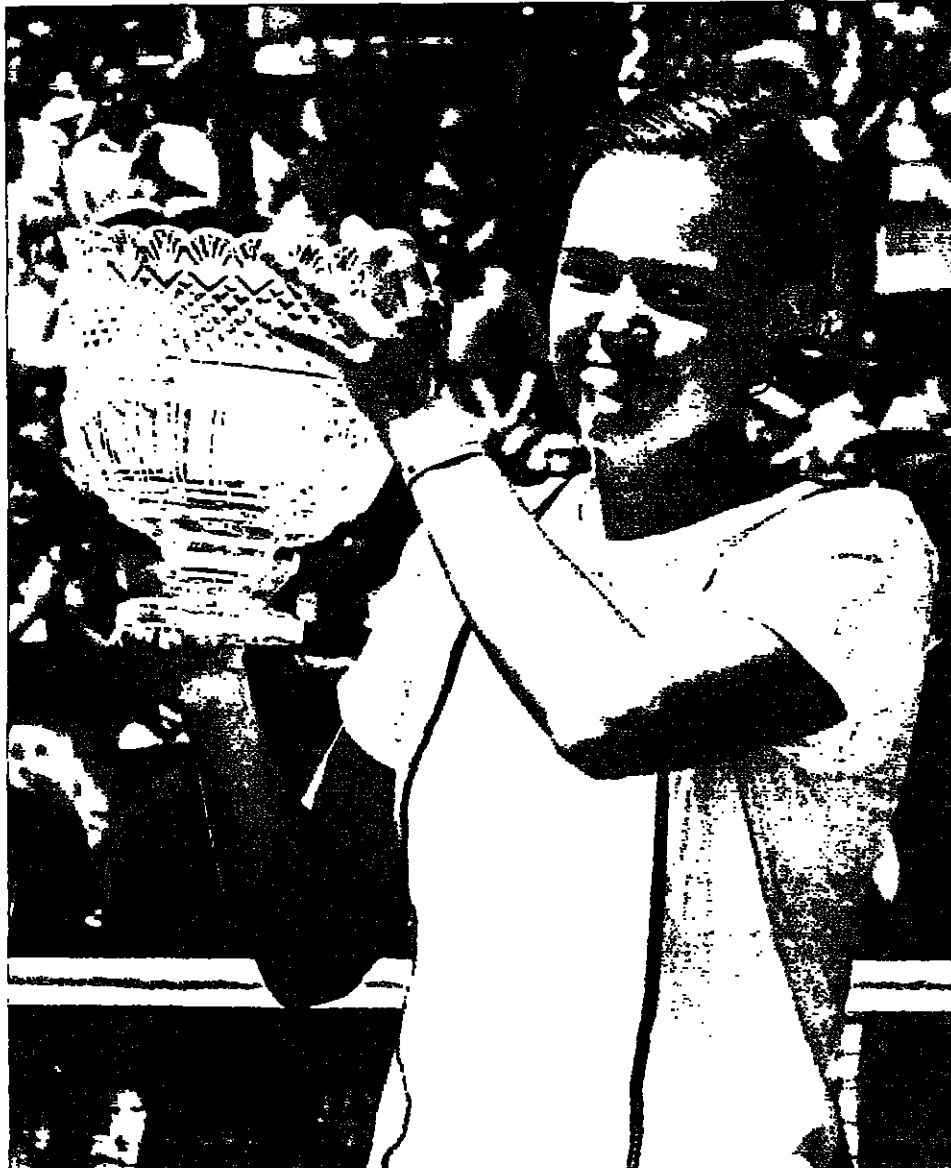
Davenport won \$80,000 and pulled within 444 points of the Swiss teen sensation in the computer rankings by taking a third tournament in as many weeks in her home state after wins in Stanford and San Diego.

"I wish I knew (how) because I would always do that," Davenport said. "I was excited to get on the hardcourts and in California, I was trying to get ready for this."

Her main goal is the U.S. Open, which begins in two weeks in New York. Hingis is the defending champion there and still the woman to beat, although Davenport, 22, has proven she can beat Hingis, even at her best.

"I was playing well," Hingis said. "Lindsay just played great the past three tournaments. She needs to take a break now and let somebody else win some tournaments. But it's not over. The U.S. Open is still coming up."

Hingis had a break point in the final set to equalise, but Davenport saved it and held to take a 5-3 lead, then



Lindsay Davenport, of Newport Beach, Calif. hold up her trophy after winning over Martina Hingis of Switzerland in the finals at the Acqua Classic in Manhattan Beach, Calif. Davenport won the match 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 (AP Photo)

broke back to win on her second match point for her 17th career singles crown.

The final point was a long rally, punctuated by a favorable net cord for Hingis and a lob save by Hingis on a Davenport forehand. But Davenport worked to the net again and hit a backhand winner.

Hingis, 17, has held the

Davenport rose to 5-6 for her career against Hingis, 2-1 on the year. Davenport handed Hingis her second loss of the year with a victory in the final of the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo in February.

Hingis came back one month later to defeat Davenport in the Evet Cup final.

Vialli before Turin judge

TURIN (AFP) — Chelsea's player-coach Gianluca Vialli arrived at a state prosecutor's office here on Monday to be interviewed about claims of drugs use in Italian soccer.

AS Roma coach Zdenek Zeman had claimed that Italian clubs were in danger of turning football into the Tour de France, and expressed his amazement at the muscles on former Juventus idol Vialli and Alessandro Del Piero.

Vialli made no comment on arrival for his session with state prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello, who had interviewed Del Piero here on Friday.

Under Italian law, Vialli is appearing as "someone informed of the facts."

Meanwhile, in a separate enquiry underway in Bologna, the Italian national team doctor Paolo Zeppilli was being interviewed by state prosecutor Giovanni Spinosa.

Spinosa, who summoned Parma's international stars Dino Baggio and Enrico Chiesa there on Friday, is leading an enquiry into the illicit distribution of the banned drug EPO.

His enquiry has focussed on a Bologna pharmacy whose founder is alleged to have been an adviser to the national squad at the European championships in England in 1996.



Real Betis Balompie's Brazilian playmaker Denilson (foreground) goes airborne after being tackled by Dani Huelva during a pre-season friendly soccer match in Huelva, southern Spain. Huelva won the match 1-0 (AP Photo)



Anna Kournikova

Kournikova to make Japan debut at Princess Cup

TOKYO (AFP) — Russian teenage sensation Anna Kournikova will make her long-delayed Japan debut when she takes part in the \$450,000 Princess Cup tennis tournament September 22-27 here.

The 17-year-old Russian, who caused a sensation by reaching the semi-finals at Wimbledon last season, failed to make a Japan debut at the Tokyo hard court tournament here last year because her mother could not get a visa.

Kournikova reached her first final at Key Biscayne in March, but has been sidelined since she strained her right thumb in a fall during a victory over Steffi Graf of Germany at Eastbourne in June.

She is expected to face tough opposition from French Open champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, former World No. 1s Graf and Yugoslav-born American Monica Seles.

Other prominent players include Amanda Coetzer of South Africa and Anke Huber of Germany, while Ai Sugiyama of Japan, Tamarine Tanasugarn of Thailand, Li Fang of China, Wang Shi-ting of Taiwan and Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia lead Asian favourites.

South Africa's De Swardt takes 1st WTA title

BOSTON (AFP) — South Africa's Mariaan de Swardt won her first WTA Tour title here Sunday, beating Austria's Barbara Schett 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 to capture the \$164,000-Boston Cup.

De Swardt, 27, won her ninth career development tour singles title in Utah two weeks ago and took the \$27,000-top prize here by topping the seventh seed

3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-5.

She earlier ousted second-seed Anke Huber of Germany and fourth-seeded American Lisa Raymond, showing no signs of the right rotator cuff tendinitis that bothered her the past two years.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1'	PHILADELPHIA 2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD... BABY'S DAY OUT Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Robin Williams & Matt Damon...in GOODWILL HUNTING Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 p.m. AL ZA'EEM Shows: 10:00 p.m.	STARTING JULY 13TH The Authority in the Service of the People Starring Hisham Yanes and the group For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155

Jordan Table

By Roufan Nahh
Special to the Jordanian

AMMAN — The Kingdom of Jordan has a table tennis team which will take part in the 16th Asian Table Tennis Championships which will be held in Morocco August 20-27. Eight players will compete in the men's and women's singles and doubles competitions. The Jordanian team consists of: Men's: Hisham Yanes, Youssef Al-Sayid, and Youssef Al-Sayid. Women's: Hisham Yanes, Youssef Al-Sayid, and Youssef Al-Sayid. The Jordanian team is currently ranked 25th in the world. The Jordanian team is currently ranked 25th in the world. The Jordanian team is currently ranked 25th in the world.

Owen fire

STAMPTON — AFP — England's World Cup star Michael Owen scored a goal and set up another for Liverpool in a 2-1 win over Southampton in the English Premier League on Sunday. The 18-year-old goal sensation struck from close range after 73 minutes to Liverpool's managerial debut. Roy Evans and his import Gerard Pique started a winning start to the new season. Liverpool captain Paul Ince flicked on a Steve McManis throw-in and Southampton keeper Paul Robinson could only push the ball as far as the end line, where he was struck by the ball into the net from 10 yards. Southampton had taken a lead with a 50th-minute goal from Norwegian Egil Oja but Liverpool hit back 20 seconds later when a delivered a perfect shot by veteran German striker Riedle to equalise. Oja, who revealed that his injury victim was close to being light training, had nothing but confidence. "I was always going to get to the score but it's the team he'll tell me himself," he said. "I'm an exceptional player and the first goal was to him and other players getting the ball for confidence should be better but he's focused and will keep him on."

Petrescu for Ajax

AMSTERDAM — AFP — Chelsea's manager Claudio Ranieri looks to be on his way to a new club. The 45-year-old was understood to be returning from World Cup duty to the Stamford Bridge player-coach Gianluca Pirlino, who scored against France 98, that he was leaving Ajax following the signing of the return to the club's managing director Gertjan Verbeke. "We became aware of him and he expressed his progress, then he would not stand in his way but he had to us and have not yet made almost 100 appearances from Sheffield Wednesday last season. But he is a player which travelled to the future. He looks as if he will become a member to leave Stamford Bridge with Mark Hughes. Hughes, who has returned to Bayern Munich, Chelsea want to be playing in the first XI this season. I will leave."

Jordanian team leaves for Arab Table Tennis Championship

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Kingdom's national table tennis teams leave Tuesday to take part in the 16th Arab Table Tennis Championship which will be held in Morocco August 20-31.

Eight players will compete in the 15-nation competition grouping Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria in addition to Jordan.

Jordan men's team consists of the Kingdom's over-25 champion Mustafa Rida, second placed Wael Sawalha, Under-21 champ Ayman Maknay, and Shawqi Dia who was ranked 30th among 191 countries in the recently-concluded first World Youth Games in Moscow.

The women's team consists of over-25 champion Tania Najjar, Under-25 champ Alia Tufaha, Under-21 champ Hanadi Tufaha and the youngest player on the team, Zina

Sha'ban, who is only ten years old and already is the Kingdom's Under-14 champion.

On the event of the team's departure, head of the delegation and President of the Jordan Table Tennis Federation (JTTF) Dr. Ismat Al Kurdi expressed his delight at Jordan's participation.

"I know that we have a better chance with the women's team," Kurdi told the Jordan Times. "But we also hope the men's team will do well," he added.

"Our aim is to get an advanced position in the women's event — hopefully second place," he said.

Women's team coach Ayman Al Kurdi expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance during the training camp which preceded the championship.

"I am satisfied with their performance and we are aiming at an advanced position," Kurdi told the Jordan Times.

Men's coach Li Chao said that the players were ready for the competi-

tion. "They have experience and good training and what they need is to concentrate and win," Chao told the Jordan Times.

Meanwhile, 10-year-old player Zina Sha'ban said that she is proud to be the youngest player in the team.

"Yes I am happy to be the spoiled one but I will do my best to get a medal or two," Sha'ban told the Jordan Times.

Shawqi Dia, Jordan's top player at last month's World Youth Games said he was ready for tough competition.

"I have the experience and the confidence to play against other players especially after the Moscow Games," Dia said.

Dr. Kurdi added that this event will reflect on our participation in the next Pan-Arab Games here in Amman.

"This will be a good opportunity for us to improve and get the experience we need to host the games in Amman," he said.

IOC doping czar attacks Samaranch

PARIS (AFP) — The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) top drug fighter has strongly criticised IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch's call to reduce the list of banned substances.

"I am appalled," said Prince Alexandre de Merode, head of the IOC medical commission, on Monday. "I don't understand."

De Merode's attack comes after Samaranch recently called for the list to be reduced and said that he saw no harm in athletes taking drugs as long they were not a threat to their health.

The IOC president also insisted the list of banned drugs in sports to be defined once and for all.

"The list of banned products is enormous. It is almost a book," said Samaranch, a former Spanish ambassador.

"An exact definition will help us decide what is banned and what is not as far as certain medicines already on the list are concerned," he added.

De Merode, in an interview in the Figaro newspaper, claimed that Samaranch's easing of the traditional hard-line stance taken by the IOC on drugs had been brought about by certain Spanish doctors.

"President Samaranch has always been against doping and he has always supported the action taken by the medical commission... I know where these ideas come from."

"Doctors who have forgotten their professional ethics," said de Merode.

"We must not forget that doping has been going on in Spanish sport for a very long time. A president of the athletics federation has even been sacked because he refused to pick athletes who did not take drugs."

"And why did all the Spanish teams pull out of the Tour de France? Did they not do it because they did not want to be tested?"

"Let me say that people who want to reduce the list of banned drugs are those who want doping to continue," said de Merode.

De Merode is expected to step up his fight to catch the drug cheats at a special IOC executive committee meeting in Lusanne on Thursday.

The meeting was hastily called following Samaranch's remarks.



Patrick Rafter, from Australia, reacts after defeating Pete Sampras to win the ATP Championship in Mason, Ohio. Rafter won 1-6, 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 (AP Photo)

Rafter wins 2nd title in a row to deny Sampras top spot

MASON, Ohio (AFP) — Patrick Rafter kept Pete Sampras from returning to the World No. 1 ranking Sunday, outlasting the American 1-6, 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 to win the 2.45 million ATP Championship.

Rafter, third in the world and building for a defense of his U.S. Open title, broke the tiring Sampras with a stinging passing return to go up 5-4 in the final set, then served out his second victory in two weeks.

The match ended on a controversial ace ruled in favour of the Australian. Sampras fans booed Swedish chair umpire Lars Graf as he left the court.

Rafter, who claimed the crown at the Canadian Open last Sunday, has won more than \$700,000 in two weeks of work.

Rafter, clearly dismayed by his lack of form while trailing 5-1 in the first set, light-heartedly handed his racket to a ballboy and told

him to have a go on the next point, but then took the weapon back and returned to the fray.

Sampras captured the first set after 27 minutes when Rafter put a listless return short into the net.

The second set stayed on serve, with Rafter earning his second break point of the match against the American with a return at the feet of Sampras. The top seed solved that problem with an ace and held for 3-3.

Rafter double-faulted on a game point in the ninth, but brought the crowd to its feet as he won a duel of drop shots against Sampras.

The popular Aussie miscued on another double and saved it with an ace which

Sampras found hard to believe. A Rafter backhand winner and an unforced error from Sampras left the Queenslander in command 5-4.

Leading 6-5, Rafter dumped a backhand into the net on a set point, then saved a Sampras point to level with a return winner.

One more untouchable return from the 25-year-old Rafter gave him a second chance to level the sets; Sampras again came up with a big serve to neutralise and then held for a tiebreaker.

Rafter stayed focused in the decider, moving out to four set points and needing only one as Sampras sailed a return long after one hour and 34 minutes.

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Owen fires Liverpool to opening win

SOUTHAMPTON (AFP)

England's World Cup hero Michael Owen scored one goal and set up another to fire Liverpool to a 2-1 win over Southampton in their English Premiership opener on Sunday.

The 18-year-old goal sensation struck from close range after 73 minutes to give Liverpool's managerial double act, Roy Evans and French import Gerard Houllier, a winning start to the new season.

Liverpool captain Paul Ince flicked on a Steve Staunton throw-in and Southampton keeper Paul Jones could only push the ball out as the England striker, who crashed the ball into the back of the net from 10 yards.

Southampton had taken the lead with a 36th-minute goal from Norwegian Egil Olsenstad but Liverpool hit back 90 seconds later when Owen delivered a perfect cross for veteran German striker Karlheinz Riedle to head home.

Evans, who revealed that long-term injury victim Robbie Fowler was close to resuming light training again, had nothing but praise for Owen.

"He's always going to get chances to score but it's about the team, he'll tell you that himself," he said.

"He's an exceptional young lad and the first goal was down to him and other players getting the ball forward."

"His confidence should get better and better but he remains very focused and his family will keep him on



Closely marked by the Southampton defence, Liverpool's Michael Owen, 2nd right, finds a way through to score for his team during the Premier League match at The Dell, Southampton, southern England. Liverpool won 2-1 (AP Photo)

the straight and narrow." Fellow boss Gerard Houllier was equally impressed with Owen.

He said: "The first time I saw him in training he looked fragile — but he's not at all. He's aggressive and he's got the guts of a top-level footballer."

But the Frenchman, who arrived at the Anfield club in the summer, said that Owen was not the only Liverpool player capable of scoring goals.

He added: "You can't compare him to anyone else but the game is not focused just on him. We scored 13 goals in our pre-season friendlies and he got only

one of them."

The Merseyside giants made an explosive start to the game, which took place 24 hours after the opening fixtures of the season on Saturday.

They forced Saints' highly-rated goalkeeper Jones into two spectacular saves in the opening four minutes.

The first chance came after just 20 seconds when Ince struck a powerful shot from 25 yards that Jones did well to turn away for a corner diving high to his right.

Two minutes later Owen went close with a fierce angled shot from inside the area that Jones blocked with an excellent save low to his

left.

But Southampton survived the early onslaught to take the lead nine minutes before the break.

Former Blackburn winger Stuart Ripley, one of seven summer signings by Saints boss David Jones, was the provider, delivering a deflected cross for Olsenstad to head wide of American keeper Brad Friedel.

Liverpool's immediate response saw Owen receive the ball wide out on the left and he supplied a pin-point cross for Riedle to launch himself and head home.

Petrescu poised for Ajax move

LONDON (AFP) — Chelsea's World Cup defender Dan Petrescu looks to be on his way to Dutch giants Ajax in a 2.5 million-pounds deal.

Petrescu was understood to be keen to stay at Chelsea when he returned from World Cup duty with Romania in France, but the Stamford Bridge club are prepared to let him go.

Chelsea player-boss Gianluca Vialli has told the versatile 29-year-old, who scored against England in the group stages of France 98, that he was not guaranteed a place in his starting XI following the signing of Spanish full-back Albert Ferrer and the return to fitness of Gustavo Poyet.

The club's managing director Colin Hutchinson said here on Monday: "We became aware last week that Ajax were interested in him and he expressed the view that if the deal could be progressed, then he would like to go there."

"We will not stand in his way but Ajax have not yet made a formal bid to us and have not yet come to the negotiating table."

Petrescu has made almost 100 appearances for Chelsea since moving from Sheffield Wednesday. He was a first-team regular last season. But he did not figure in the 18-man squad which travelled to Coventry for Chelsea's opening day fixture.

It now looks as if he will become the fourth first-team squad member to leave Stamford Bridge since the end of last season, with Mark Hughes, Frank Sinclair and Danny Granville already having moved on.

Petrescu, who has returned to Bucharest for a break, said: "I am very sad. Chelsea want to sell me. Vialli said I will not be playing in the first XI this year. If I can find a new club to go to, I will leave."

Gregg ranks Cantona United's No. 1

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Munich survivor Harry Gregg hopes to meet the man he regards as the most influential player in Manchester United's recent history at Tuesday's Munich testimonial match.

It is not George Best, Denis Law or Bobby Charlton. According to Gregg, goalkeeper in the ill-fated Busby Babes team, pride of place in United's hall of fame over the past 40 years goes to Eric Cantona.

Gregg insists that no other player since the late Fifties has shaped the club's destiny quite as Cantona did.

The enigmatic Frenchman, who stunned the club's supporters when he retired in May 1997, will make one final appearance in a United shirt in the match in front of a packed Old Trafford.

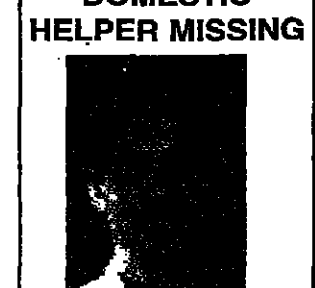
The game is to benefit the survivors and the families of the victims of the 1958 Munich air crash, but most of the attention will go to Cantona on his return.

Former Northern Ireland

goalkeeper Gregg, who walked away from the air crash which took the lives of eight of his team-mates, is not resentful.

"I'm looking forward to seeing someone I hold in great admiration and that is Eric Cantona," he said. "If I don't get to speak to him then at least I will see him again."

DOMESTIC HELPER MISSING



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SOUTH

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